

**COMMON SENSE  
ABOUT  
GIFTED  
CHILDREN**

**WILLARD ABRAHAM**

# COMMON SENSE ABOUT GIFTED CHILDREN

by *Willard Abraham*

*Head of the Division of Special  
Education, Arizona State College*

Based on an intensive study of all material in the field, and Dr. Abraham's own wide knowledge and experience, this thorough, practical book explores the whole subject of the gifted child in our society.

Each year we spend millions of dollars for our country's less fortunate children, the retarded and the handicapped. It is time, says the author, for us to devote as much money and attention to the gifted children from whose ranks must come our future leaders in every field.

Dr. Abraham makes helpful suggestions for parents and teachers, including:

- How to tell if your child is gifted
- Healthy, realistic parental attitudes toward achieving a sensible home life
- Your exceptional child's relationship to your other children, friends and the community
- How to get the most out of elementary and secondary schools
- Choosing the proper college

*(Continued on back flap)*

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*Common Sense  
About Gifted  
Children*

EXPLORATION SERIES IN EDUCATION

Under the Advisory Editorship of  
JOHN GUY FOWLKES

# *Common Sense About Gifted Children*

WILLARD ABRAHAM

*Professor of Education and  
Head, Division of Special Education  
Arizona State College  
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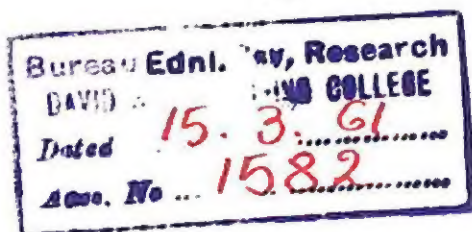
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*Their dad's effort is dedicated to  
Eddie and Andy—  
whether they are gifted or not*



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## Editor's Introduction

AMBITIONS, hopes, aspirations, longings, and prayers surge high and strong in parents with respect to the future of their children. To a real degree the "feelings and dreams" of fathers and mothers toward their sons and daughters are shared by the truly professional educator—especially classroom teachers. Increasingly and universally it is realized that the pattern of adult life of tomorrow can best be woven and set in the childhood of today. This is particularly true of gifted children. Influential as emotional factors are in fulfilling the potential of all human beings, maximum development of children can take place only if parents and teachers join in by identifying with the capacity and make-up of children and act accordingly.

The importance and education of gifted children in our nation have been treated during recent months by daily newspapers, publications of the various learned societies, so-called popular magazines like *Look*, *Life*, *The Saturday Evening Post* on the one hand and *Harper's*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *The Saturday Review* on the other. Radio and television networks similarly are directing serious attention to the matter under discussion. Among the major questions or issues which are being raised are: Who are the gifted children? How can they be identified? What kinds of education should they have?

A series of specific queries of indefinite number spring from the broader matters just presented. How early can giftedness be identified? How can parents be sure of the unusualness of the abilities of their young? Should children learn to read, write, and "figure" before they go to school? Should bright pupils skip grades? What kind of high school should a smart child attend? Is there a minimum chronological age at which a child should leave home and go to college? How many subjects should be carried in the elementary school?—in high school?—in college? Should the gifted be encouraged or discouraged to do homework? How should parents and teachers act toward gifted children? Such are some of the details involved in the best handling of our gifted children.

The present volume sheds much light on these and related matters. Furthermore, it is easily read and, in keeping with its title, reflects much common sense. At the same time it is bulwarked by many reports of solid research and proven effective practice.

The author has brought into play not only the scholarship of the distinguished educator but also a skill in writing gained in part from having served as a special writer on the staff of a newspaper in the second largest city of the U.S.A. The study of this work will prove to be an interesting, pleasant, and profitable experience for both parents and educators.

*January, 1958*

JOHN GUY FOWLKES

## Preface

As THE page proofs for this book come through, Russia has already launched its first two round-the-world missiles, thousands of words have recently been spoken by men and women who feel the time is ripe for getting on the bandwagon of a science-above-all routine, the schools are being criticized for reflecting the society in which they exist.

And the gifted child is being "discovered" by many who view him as a "gimmick." As important as he is, we stand in the dangerous position of swinging the pendulum so wildly in his direction that we may be planting the seeds for a reaction to him and his contributions that could be even more disastrous than the neglect which this book discusses.

The daily newspapers and weekly news magazines indicate more than ever that we are ready for action. More and more communities are past the lip service stage. But the times call for careful planning, for building up a methodical approach to teaching and living with our gifted children. These are not times for latching onto wild ideas of Johnny-come-latelys who suddenly realize that "something has to be done" and whose suggestions may show little recognition of the considerable thought, study, and experimentation of recent years.

Most encouraging among developments of the past few months is the recognition of the gifted child as a person who has much to contribute to all, but *also* as one who deserves the good life (as each of us does) in accordance with his own personal needs, ambitions, and hopes.

Now that this book is almost ready for the reader (and do-er) perhaps a moment may be taken for the thanks so richly deserved—

to Ruth Miller and Ruth Loeb for their help in proofing the galleys and page proofs (and to Mike and Hammy who let them)—

to Grace Connolly and her girls who did so much of the typing and retyping—

to Dr. G. D. McGrath, Dr. and Mrs. Gammage, the Ruskins, John and Lorraine, and especially Dale for their direct and indirect encouragement—

and mainly to the following wonderful promises of the future for being the finest of inspirations and representing the thousands of others very much like them: Eddie A., Ronnie, Jill, Peter, Eddie Z., Ellen, Reggie, Sharon, Marcie, Gary, Lester, Bobby, Gail.

WILLARD ABRAHAM

*Tempe, Arizona*  
*January, 1958*



*Common Sense  
About Gifted  
Children*







As important as the eagerness and intensity of one little boy, your little boy . . . and as vital as the health, peace, and happiness of the rest of us . . . our gifted children . . . our richest link with the future.

*Art Clark and Counterpoint Productions*



# I

## *Why This Is an Important Subject*

SOMETIME soon in the quiet of the evening after the rest of the family is asleep, sit alone in a dim light, or no light at all, and give yourself a present. Give yourself the luxury all of us can afford, and few of us take, of just a few minutes of solitude and thought devoted to a problem whose solution may remove many of the major difficulties we all face.

So often we go round and round with our problems, finding no answers, but becoming more convinced that we are in a hopeless mess of not enough money, no solution to a serious illness, and no ways to avoid family conflict or economic deprivation.

"If only there were an answer!" we plead with ourselves, pointlessly and persistently. But the panacea we seek fails to appear. And even if it did, we would recognize it for the fraud that it is; for no problem that ties us in knots can have a solution so simple, obvious, and easy to apply that we feel we should have thought of it long ago. A snap of the fingers won't balance your budget—nor will it help avoid cancer in child, parent, husband, or wife. A flick of a switch won't bring sweetness and light into your family relationships, any more than it will bring mutual respect, understanding, and peace into a world filled with personal and national tensions.

No, the answers are hard to find for all of our difficulties, and they take our best thought at our quietest part of the day. That's why the late evening calm is a good time to start thinking about a problem that can bring wealth, in its broadest sense, to all of us. Our task is very difficult, however. How can we consider the solutions for a difficulty whose existence many of us do not even recognize? And just as insurmountable is the task of seeing the job that faces us, without belittling its magnitude and importance, or viewing it through the wrong end of a telescope. A third difficulty we face lies in the comment that, "It's too late." One thing is certainly true—it will never be *earlier* than it is this minute. We can't turn the clock back, or make ourselves younger, or undo what we've done, or do what we haven't done.

### LOOKING AT OURSELVES AND THE FUTURE

Let's take ourselves—and the present moment—and some of the problems we face. What would we say if someone suggested that they had a possible solution for them? Our retort might be a polite laugh or smile, or something considerably stronger. All right, let's look at a few of the problems:

I have a mentally retarded child. If only something could be done to avoid such developments—or if we could only be helped now to bring him up to a normal mentality.

I live in constant fear of a heart attack ending our family life. We've had so many near to us, and it's probably only a matter of time until it hits closer.

We lost three of our close relatives in war, three who died so young. And now I have children of my own, and I worry about the shaky peace in the world. Do we always have to live on the thin edge of war?

The hopelessness which we all feel in discussions which end with "Do we have to . . ." is our hint to a new idea. For while the answer to tough problems is never found just by opening a book, maybe the answer can be *started* through a few words and actions

that lead, in ever-widening ripples and circles, to a multitude of words and actions.

The idea on which the answer is founded is small, but it may be like a nugget of hydrogen energy, with its potentialities of startling rays of strength that can extend into all of our lives. The idea for that late evening solitude is—people, not just any people, but some pretty special people who live in our homes, our communities, and all over this country.

Let's look at this matter from another direction. If we set fire tomorrow to all the coal and oil still underground, you would see headlines a foot high. If within the next week we blotted out all our automobile plants by a restrictive type of atomic bomb, you would be speechless with horror. If we deliberately tore up our vast expanses of beautiful cross-country roads, your shock would be limitless. Difficult as it is to believe, we are being even more destructive in hard-headedly ignoring our greatest natural resource of all. Waste of a material nature we can see rather easily, and be horrified by it, but waste of people leaves many of us on the "ho-hum" sidelines—except if the people happen to be *our* children, or if the people are those who can bring good health to *our* house. A surprising comment appeared in print not long ago to the effect that *ten persons* have led Western culture to its current peak, a thought that tickles the imagination when we consider the *hundreds* we have high on the intellectual scale. Dr. Terman of Stanford University fortified that point when he once said that from the ranks of gifted children, and from nowhere else, are our geniuses in every line recruited.

In recent months there has been a great deal of talk about gifted children, but much of the conversation and many of the articles have come out of the "do-good" recesses of people's hearts. We are long overdue for a practical approach through which teachers and parents, and the public as a whole, can face up to what all of us as individuals are losing because we've talked much and acted little.

"Cancer may be a virus," some of our skilled medical men tell us, but do we ever stop to realize that 30 years ago there may

have been a boy who never even finished high school and who, if he had been educated properly, might today have worked out a detailed solution for the world's most dreaded disease? We seem to be on the verge of "de-salting" our sea water, but don't we recognize the fact that the individual human brain which may long ago have enabled billions of gallons of water to soak in and vitalize our huge dust bowls and desert regions, and feed the hungry millions whose babies are suffering from hopeless malnutrition, left school because he was just plain bored? We are worried sick about keeping peace in our time, but can't we see that our peace in the future might lie in the muddy, sweaty, pudgy hand of a five-year-old who is asking his mother and teacher "Why?" three hundred times a day and needs a few answers?

The situation isn't all black, however. In spite of our muddling through and our veneration for the great American average, we have occasionally salvaged giftedness and used it to our advantage. It could not have been human mediocrity which devised a Salk formula and buried our fear of polio. It cannot be a low common denominator of mentality which has been allocated \$450,000 by the Ford Foundation to discover what chemistry can do to determine the causes of mental deficiency. No, Dr. Salk and Dr. Pauling represent many of the intellects that contribute to the welfare of all of us. But aren't we now ready to forget the chance involved, and put our future bets on a *plan* in our homes, schools, and communities that can bring answers to the toughest problems of today and our ever more complicated future?

It is an old story that most of us find it very easy to ignore a situation that doesn't brush up against us. A million Chinese drowned in a flood is, strangely enough, less vital to us than a one cent increase in the price of coffee at the corner chain store. That's why the personal approach has been used here—to indicate that how long we live, how peacefully we get along, how pleasant our jobs and homes are, how healthfully our children are born and grow up, all of these are part of the tapestry of neglect and oversight of our gifted children.

### THESE FIGURES DON'T LIE

Statistics sometimes tell a story simply and vividly, and perhaps these do:

Of all the people in this country qualified to work for and earn the highest academic degree, the Ph.D., and make appropriate contributions to our culture, health, and scientific advancement after completing it, only 2 percent—or *one in 50*—attain it.

Of our top 25 percent of high school graduates, half do not finish college. These are our brightest youngsters, though not necessarily all defined as gifted, and in the richest country in the world, where higher education has seemingly become so commonplace, we cheat ourselves each year of the major contributions of 250,000 creative and talented young people. As we will notice later on, it isn't only money which ends their education so prematurely—among other causes are the miserable classroom experiences of some of them in elementary and secondary school and the failure of their parents to realize that education literally "pays off" to the tune of \$75,000 or more in additional lifetime earnings.

We have (1) only two colleges and universities which offer full sequences of courses to help prepare teachers of gifted children; (2) one state that certifies teachers in that area (30 states certify teachers in speech, 27 in hard-of-hearing, 22 in mental retardation, and a total of 122 colleges and universities offer specialized sequences in preparation related to exceptional children); (3) *no* state that has a full-time person in its department of education devoted to the education of the gifted; and (4) *not one* faculty member in 122 colleges and universities was reported to be devoting full-time to the area of the gifted. No one begrudges the dozens of college and university training programs to prepare those who teach the mentally retarded, speech handicapped, blind, and other exceptional children—but are the gifted *less* important? It just cannot be so, if we recognize the ways in which our gifted—if properly educated—can provide answers to the frustrations and limitations of children, and their parents, in other exceptional child categories.

Approximately 1 percent of our children have superior intelligence and/or talent, and they are held back in most schools to the level of much of the other 99 percent. Wilting and wasted, that 1 percent teases and taunts, and becomes noisily nagging to a teacher without the



time, temperament, or training to challenge these youngsters. In Connecticut, a state with some of the most advanced thinking on this whole subject, the superior group includes about 15 percent of the children.

If we can relax in the wake of this last point, we're more tough than we think we are: A frequently quoted comment in the field of gifted children is that children with an IQ of 140 waste half their time in the average classroom—and those with 160 waste *all* their time!

In your late evening reverie you may have already reached the point at which we so often arrive, conveniently for our mental health: "So who's to blame?" Another puff on the cigarette, a rock in the rocker, and it's inevitable that we'll find someone else on whom to palm off the blame. If you are a parent, the easy "out" is to point the probing finger at teachers, who spend all those hours and days and years with children. But teachers are already overburdened and underpaid enough without our heaping unconditional responsibilities on their shoulders. No more valid is the evil eye of suspicion tossed in the direction of parents, who have had *their* share of problems in the insecurities of depression, war, and uneasy postwar boom. Where does that leave the rest of us who are both teachers *and* parents? Should we continue the search for a scapegoat somewhere else, or lay the unwanted burden of blame on the doorstep of a vague "community" or "society" or "public"?

We will be much smarter if we turn the dial completely from "who didn't" to "who will," from "what wasn't" to "what will be," if we stop pointing at each other and save our energy for the 600,000 or more children who are gifted, frequently neglected, and average almost one for every classroom in the country.

You've seen signs like these: "Save a life! It may be your own!" and "Conserve our trees." Both of these ideas can easily be adapted to the biggest life-saving and conservation program we face. If we applied half the energy to it that a war generation devoted to piling up bundles of newspapers and huge mountains of used tin cans, we'd have cancer, heart troubles, nationalistic aggression, and economic cycles on the run.

## THE TASK AHEAD

Our job is big. But it is clear-cut. It starts with two major tasks.

1. *Find the gifted children.* In our schools, in our families, in our churches—find *all* of them, in all races and socioeconomic levels, in the Gold Coast and slum areas of our cities, in the windswept Navajo country of northern Arizona and the French-speaking snow country of northern Maine, hidden away in the Tennessee hills and around the lumber camps of the great northwest forests. No geographical area, skin color, or occupational group has a monopoly on giftedness, so the job becomes one of ferreting out our bright children by valid tests, observation, and all the scientific, semi-scientific, and intuitive means at our command. Rural areas and so-called minority groups may need more help than others in order to avoid waste which is compounded by prejudice. In many communities the teachers, administrators, and parent groups have started the hunt, but their ranks must be swelled until they reach the proportions of a national crusade intent on conducting a search for talent that will selfishly make the lives of all of us healthier, happier, and more peaceful. Our obligation is obviously not to ourselves alone—for we owe to these children the possibility of growth up to *their* capacities, based on seeing that they are fully informed, that their curiosity is satisfied, the questioning spirit encouraged, and their patience and adjustability to the rest of us developed so they can take our limitations in stride.

2. *Encourage them to stay in school.* See that they have the best teachers, and if none of our teachers in a community is good enough, we just have to keep on the alert, and put our school boards on the prowl with us, to get the best available anywhere—even if salaries have to be pushed up to a respectable level! The problem extends much further too—into those who teach the teachers, into the standards of selection used in our teacher-preparation institutions, into our communities with a public relations barrage awakening them to the terrible waste of some of our present

schools as they are taught and operated. If we can attract more of our topnotch people into teaching, you can be sure the curriculum will be enriched so the youngsters will want to stay in school right up to their intellectual capacities, will like to study, be eager, curious, absorbing, attentive.

Those tasks are just two of the many that will develop as we go along in our discussion, and the form they take will depend on the reader and the doer. Certainly as vital as the school is the home environment which will be given specific treatment later on. Combined, they put into practice the statement of George Santayana that "nature needs nurture to round out its human possibilities." Our objective here is to lay wide open the scene of loss and neglect, instill a feeling of guilt in those of us who have ignored the problem, and promote a gnawing need for action among all who could profit from fulfilling the destiny in these lives of our bored bright children.

Let's look at one of these children for a moment. Let's pick Tommy who is in the first grade. If he cannot read already, he'll soon be able to, long before the others in his class. His teacher is probably efficient and well-prepared, but she has Tommy *plus* 40 other youngsters—and she's human—so she thinks: "A few learn fast like Tommy, a few at the other end of the scale, and most of them in the middle. Tommy'll do all right by himself, so I'd better concentrate on the others, especially those slow ones. If I don't keep after them, I'll get all the complaints of their parents, and the second grade teacher, too."

So the tragic neglect begins. Tommy is on his own for too much of the day, unfortunately not capable of finding his own road or carrying his own lamp to light the way. Sometimes the teacher will "enrich" his program, but too frequently that merely means ten problems when the others do five. He doesn't like that any more than any of us would, so he begins to slow down, be like the others. At the start he held his hand up often to answer a question, but the teacher feels she has to give turns, so Tommy doesn't hold his hand up at all any more. "Our best brains are running



errands," said a recent magazine article—or they are cleaning erasers, ringing bells, or sorting out supplies. Is that the kind of challenge and preparation we want for tomorrow's leaders, scientists, educators, and legal minds?

And—is that the kind of unhappiness in which we want these children to be submerged? It is quite natural for prospective parents to worry about the possibility that their baby will be blind, mentally retarded, cerebral palsied, or have some other developmental deficiency, but it is so rare for the concern to extend into the area of giftedness. Still, if we are aware of the gloom and boredom that brightness can bring to our children, we might be tempted to add it to the list of qualities we do not want our offspring to have. In a society where "egghead" is the epithet used for adults with ideas, and "four eyes," "brain," or "smarty" are the names condoned by some children (*and* their parents) for the younger counterpart, we are more than ready for a complete, honest evaluation. We are past due for no longer feeling threatened by our children at home and at school who are smarter than their parents and teachers, and ripe for openly viewing what we can do for them and what they, in turn, can do for us.

### SCARING US INTO ACTION

Many recent articles about gifted children have used an unhealthy scare technique to arouse interest in them. The theme of a better life for all of us and a fulfillment of the potentialities of these wonderful youngsters is subdued in a shadow of fear—fear of Russia, fear of our not being world dominant. So let us see this situation in its right perspective, and if it attracts converts to the needs of society in general and gifted children in particular, we welcome them to our side despite the unwholesome ticket which brought them in.

We have been terribly smug toward all other countries (especially Russia), our theme being "Anything you can do, we can do better," but there is some evidence that says just the opposite on some sub-

jects. Perhaps we each do work only minutes to their hours to earn enough to buy a loaf of bread, but the scare comes in our facing up to the USSR in recent years turning out 520,000 graduate engineers who go into engineering, while more than one-third of ours flitted away into other jobs. We need nearly 50,000 new ones every year, and are getting fewer than half (23,000); even if all of them stayed in engineering (which they don't) we would still lag far behind the 53,000 graduated in Russia in 1955.

Another side of the picture was presented in a recent article, however.

In an address to the student body, Chatham College (Pittsburgh, Pa.) Sept. 18, 1956, Pres. Paul R. Anderson included the following remarks:

"In recent months a horde of observers have assailed our eyes and ears with reports that Russia is producing engineers faster than the United States. In this age of specialization, they warn us, the Soviets are out-producing us in specialists; they are amassing skills at a rate greater than ours. In the eyes of such prophets we are headed for second place in this grim 'world series.'

"These Jeremiahs . . . arrive at their melancholy conclusions by limiting their comparisons to certified engineers. They ignore the stream of graduates with non-technical degrees flowing steadily from our colleges and universities—a torrent compared with Russia's trickle. These graduates, many of them excellently grounded in the sciences, have also been prepared for leadership . . . endowed with warmth, curiosity, and understanding. We are way ahead of Russia in the production of brain power, and we can be thankful we are producing men and women, not automatons. One of the basic reasons we are where we are as a nation is that we believe in the social results of liberal education."<sup>1</sup>

Observers come home from Russia with additional ideas too: They have virtually eliminated illiteracy—they operate their schools six days a week—algebra, geometry, trigonometry, physics, biology, astronomy, psychology, and six years of language are required of all students—ten years of free compulsory education will soon replace

<sup>1</sup> *School and Society*, March 30, 1957, p. 112.

the seven years now required<sup>2</sup>—their average professor earns ten times what an ordinary worker earns, and outstanding professors receive the equivalent of the annual salary of an American industrial corporation president—their medical schools graduated 27,000 while we graduated 7000.

A lot of publicity has been given to the fact that all of our high schools do not teach physics, chemistry, and geometry.<sup>3</sup> Although our physical scientists may scream like stuck pigs at the thought, the fact is that we have even *more serious* deficiencies in our schools. Obviously we need the specialists, but we need specialists-plus. William Benton recently agreed with that idea when he stated, “. . . our best overall opportunity for doing a better educational job than the USSR continues to lie in educating *whole* men. This must and will remain our goal rather than the Soviet prototype of the narrowly trained specialist, technician, or functionary.” How many capable of studying them have absorbed the vital elements of getting along with others in a tense world, in areas like psychology, anthropology, and sociology? Which colleges and universities teach Russian, the most important foreign language to us for today and for many tomorrows? Who gives a hoot for semantics, the most vibrant link in our ability to know what we and others are talking about? No one will underestimate the extreme importance of nuclear physics—but it is *at least* as important to catch up with these science areas by learning how to understand and communicate with people in our neighborhoods (town and world) in order to avoid having ourselves bombed into oblivion by next Christmas or the one

<sup>2</sup> But, educationally speaking, things aren't all as bad as some “scare-mongers” would have us believe, according to Walter Crosby Eccles. In his article “American and Soviet Study of Science,” *School and Society*, March 31, 1956, pp. 115–117, he cites Soviet and U.S. secondary school enrollment figures for 1951. There was 1,384,000 including correspondence courses; ours was 6,611,000 full-time, or almost five times as many. So even if *all* their high school students study mathematics and science, and a smaller percentage of ours do, in actual *numbers* we would still be in the lead by far.

<sup>3</sup> In Chapter V we'll cast a questioning glance at the so-called “reduction” of current secondary school offerings in science and mathematics mentioned by some people who have used their statistics loosely.

after it. We're not used to being second-rate, but we certainly won't do anything about our also-ran position until we first of all realize that we *have* it in some areas.

After we face the realities of life near the 21st century, we must turn to the ineffective manner in which we by-pass those realities. A recent series of surveys indicates that teachers, administrators, parents, and the children themselves are concerned, but in each home and community there is a need for guidance to sort out the extraneous, set up the objectives, and keep our collective eye on the goal—whether it is as grandiose as national security or something as evasive as one little boy's dream of growing up to help people who are sick.<sup>4</sup>

A huge pile of questionnaires was distributed, and then tabulated to find out, among other things:

Whether our school administrators and teachers were alerted to the best means of identifying and providing for our gifted children in the schools.

How objective parents of gifted children can be about them in the aggregate; what their attitudes are toward the education gifted children are receiving; what their own major concerns are and what they believe are the main worries of the children; and what their recommendations are for themselves, the schools, and others.

What gifted children are interested in; what their attitudes are toward their families, school, teachers, friends, special lessons; what their wishes, ambitions, problems, and fears are; how they feel about television, motion pictures, radio, and comic books.

### SPADEWORK AROUND THE COUNTRY

In spite of recent surveys such as this it would, of course, be misleading to assume that little or nothing has been studied in the field of gifted children before this book was written. Such would be presumptuous, as well as totally untrue. The literature is extensive.

<sup>4</sup> Four separate questionnaires—filled out by parents, teachers, administrators, and children—were widely distributed in Arizona, and the results of the studies are reported in several publications, including the professional journal *Understanding the Child*, October, 1957.



The recommendations are varied. Hundreds of communities and thousands of parents have made profound contributions. Cities as widely separated geographically as Portland, Oregon, San Diego, California, University City, Missouri, and Cleveland, Ohio are in the forefront of a movement constantly increasing its momentum to put the gifted child in the spotlight. Representative of the thought and sincere work which have already gone into the area is the following series of recommendations from the New York Regents Council on the Readjustment of High School Education in a folder entitled *Bright Kids—We Need Them*:

- That every effort be made to match learning activities to the level of the pupil instead of matching the pupil to the level of the class.
- That each pupil's activities and progress through school be so planned by school and parents that he will be graduated as a well-adjusted individual socially, physically and intellectually.
- That schools use every resource to find the bright, and that in each school . . . some especially interested staff member be given specific responsibility for discovering ways and means to give these pupils more adequate opportunities.
- That the bright child be given his fair share of his teacher's time and attention to insure the full development of his abilities.
- That the public relations aspect of the problem be carefully considered, since the public needs accurate information, tactfully presented, to counteract the existing folklore about the bright.

Many individuals feel they are lighting a candle in the midst of a massive, encompassing darkness, and hope there is some way of unifying their efforts into an emblazoned brilliancy. The current situation remains ill-defined, with many false ideas to be dissipated, and with the gifted child needing recognition from those who do not even know there is a problem, or that while they cannot create a gifted person they have the unfortunate capacity to destroy one. Add to those difficulties the parent who falsely assumes his child is gifted, the bright child who drifts through school and life as a mediocrity, the neighborhood which blunders along listlessly in its economic and cultural doldrums, the family where the bright child is driven beyond his physical and emotional endurance, the

teacher who recognizes the problem but is caught in a vise of collecting milk money, keeping records, sponsoring clubs, sending messengers, and just plain large numbers of students—and you begin to see the situation in its magnitude. The size of the issue has been recognized by many, including Dr. Lewis Terman whose long-range classic study of gifted children has made an extremely significant contribution; he once said, "The greater the intellectual gifts of a child the more difficult is the problem of making the most of them."

In the pages that follow we will look at various solutions which have been proposed. One, of course, is to continue as we are, hallow the present as the best of all possible situations. But we won't get far with that, not if we talk to parents and teachers, not if we visit classrooms and see the brilliant ones being lost or bludgeoned into averageness, not if we listen to what key school administrators all over the country are saying about the desperate situation of gifted children and their inability to cope with it to the satisfaction of the children and themselves. No, the *status quo* isn't nearly good enough—not in a world where a lot of people in industry and professional education are ripe for action.

There are those who disparage that "do-nothing" attitude, and replace it with an equally ineffective one. "Let's do it all," they say. "Start on the preschool level, filter out the bright ones, give them a program that fully challenges them. *And* do the same in the elementary schools, secondary schools, and colleges. *And* select better persons for teaching. *And* attract more qualified ones by paying them more and improving their working and living conditions." This is what you might call the scatter-your-fire-and-you-might-help-one-gifted-kid technique. This is what, as a country, we have been trying to do, and the results are disastrous. Leadership, or vegetating, cannot be provided at the whim of our thousands of communities, and hope for the best. It just won't—and hasn't—come, for more unity of purpose is needed.

Let us think primarily of the objectives of satisfying the needs of industry, our country, and the youngsters involved, and of where

to apply our collective abilities to satisfy those needs most quickly and easily. Let's tap all the resources we can to accomplish that goal.

Even before we get started the cry will hit our eardrums: "We can't afford it! Costs too much! Stop tampering with our educational system! It's doing *all right*!" Of course, it is, but not all right enough. And before we leave that cost idea, let's pull it out for special consideration. It's funny (if it weren't so tragic!) to hear that kind of statement in the United States in its most prosperous era. You've been aware of all the horn-tooting about the more cars, telephones, and homes we have per community than anywhere else in the world. Isn't it strange how we brag when it suits us—and cry the financial blues at other times? Furthermore, we don't beat the breast of poverty when there's a new plane to be bought that costs up in the millions; do we?

### A NEED FOR BOLDNESS AND DARING

Just a few years back we smiled at the possibility of a labor force in the United States of 60 million; now we seriously anticipate close to 80 million by 1965.<sup>5</sup> But the concern isn't with numbers. We may have enough people to go around, but what about their *quality* from a job point of view? An increase of more than one-third will be needed in the highly educated professional and technical levels by 1965, and there is genuine concern on the part of the labor market experts about where they are to come from. Our relatively high incidence of gifted children is probably the answer.

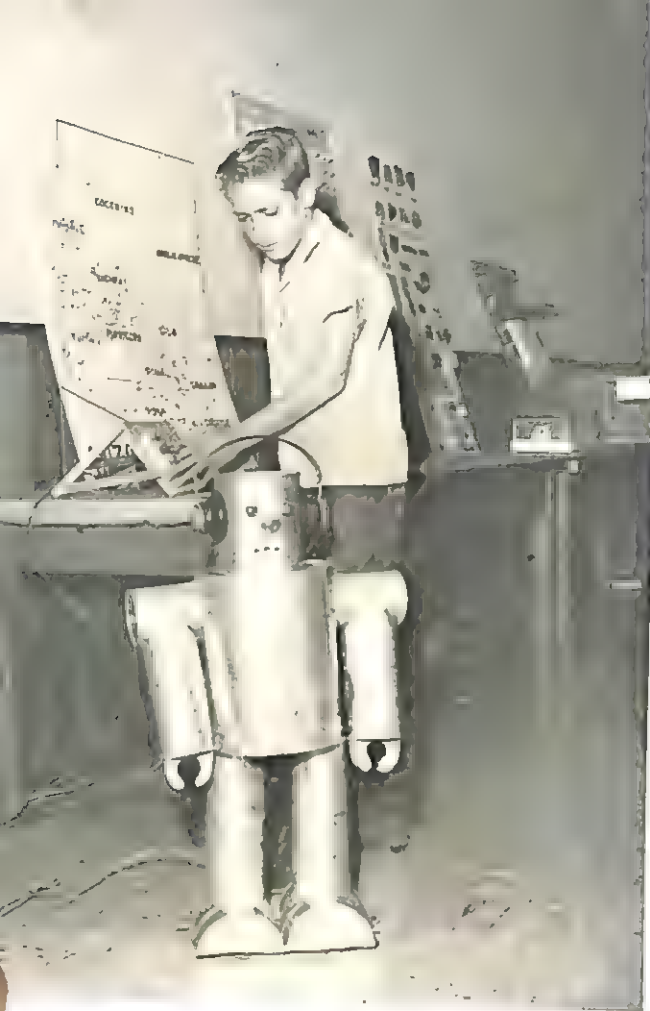
We are due for a daring experiment in this field, based on a realistic approach. We're ready to evaluate where we are and what we intend to do—fast. Since we have failed on a large scale so far to provide the challenge our thousands of gifted children deserve and our society must have for its survival, it is time for a concentrated summary of our status, and a series of new ideas, even though they may startle the status-quoers. Eugene Ayers

<sup>5</sup> *Our Manpower Future—1955–65*, U.S. Department of Labor, 1957.

recently wrote, "If it is possible to teach genius instead of merely hoping it will come along, the future will belong to the society which first discovers how," and even more challengingly Robert Browning many years ago put together words which encourage us in our plans for a bright future for these youngsters whom we have kept from developing to their full potential. He wrote, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp or what's a Heaven for?"







Science . . . but also the three R's, art, music, getting along with people . . . and where else do their abilities and leadership shine? Where *don't* they shine?

*Left, Photography Dept., Arizona State College, Tempe; below, Ted Akimoto*



# II

## *Who Are the Gifted Children?*

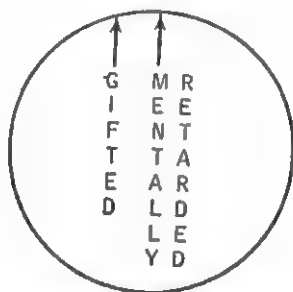
EVERY few weeks a new magazine may come to your house, and the chances are that it will frequently contain an article about gifted children. The subject has become a fashionable kind of conversation piece, just as is a butter churn in the corner of a bachelor girl's apartment or a new kind of flat-top haircut among teen-age boys. We want to be "up" on things, so we join the parade.

But we are all Johnny-come-latelys, for many centuries ago Plato talked about IQ and giftedness, without using those words, when he said, "We must watch them from their youths upwards and make them perform actions in which they are most likely to forget or to be deceived, and he who remembers and is not deceived is to be selected, and he who fails in the trial is to be rejected. That will be the way."

That was a promise of good times for the gifted, but the years between have been rugged. Off and on until around 1850 the bright child was admired, much was expected from him, and he was frequently even held in awe. *There* lay the danger, for anything that is awesome may easily become suspect and strange; to many of us anything "different" warrants the jaundiced look out of the corner of our eye. Sociologists know this as they report on communities where prejudice against certain religious and racial groups hits the top—communities where *no* members of the race or religion even live! From 1850 until early in this century child

prodigies and other bright children fell into increasingly bad repute. Neurotic, psychotic, abnormal, queer—these words or their equivalents represented a growing attitude.

"Ripen early and rot early" was the underlying theme, and for the so-called average person it was a consoling thought. "Their child may be smart *now*, but just watch what happens to him when he grows up!" or "So he's bright—but he can't hit a ball, or run, or jump like mine can" were ideas that many took for granted. It may have been good for their mental health to think that way, but studies since then have shown how far off the track such conclusions were. The picture looked like this, with two extremes close together on a continuum:



However, no longer are the two categories brought near to each other; instead they show up in chart form like this:



More than 35 years ago Dr. Lewis Terman paved the way for much of our current thinking on gifted children. He rebelled against the suspicions attached to giftedness, and in his exhaustive study of 1500 children, plus the numerous follow-ups of that study, he has concluded that these children are a possession in which we should find both pride and happiness. When compared with a group of so-called average children, these surpass them in physique, health, and social adjustment. Character tests show their moral attitudes are

superior, and their academic records indicate they can rather easily pull themselves at least two grades above the one in which they are enrolled.

So what does that mean—specifically? What answer does that provide for those of us who know a scrawny, “four-eyes,” small, sickly, shy, bright child? What do the years of research mean when we think of a child who “goes wrong,” who happens to be bright, and whose brightness is singled out as the cause for it all? Just this—the proof lies in the larger studies, in the more detailed observations, and not in the single, isolated case which all of us can provide from our own experiences. Of course we may know a gifted child who isn’t as attractive as another child, but that fails to indicate anything. We may know a teacher’s little girl who is a discipline problem in school, a psychiatrist’s offspring who needs psychiatric help himself, a grocer’s son who looks undernourished, or the proverbial shoemaker’s child in torn shoes. The generalization that springs to our lips should be suppressed for a very simple reason—it is untrue.

All this *does* mean is that bright little Joe *might* wear thick glasses, be antisocial, and flop on the baseball diamond. But the facts, supported by the Terman and other studies, are that a hundred bright little Joes when compared with a hundred not-so-bright little Jims will collectively come out ahead in many ways. Here are some of Dr. Terman’s other conclusions from his investigations of gifted children:

No significant sex differences in intelligence were found.

They came mainly from urban professional, semiprofessional, business and skilled families, but there were many others too.

Their parents averaged four or five years more schooling than the average parents of their generation.

Their homes possessed more than the average number of books.

Their family incomes were above the average.

The incidence of broken homes was below the average.

Nearly half learned to read before starting school.

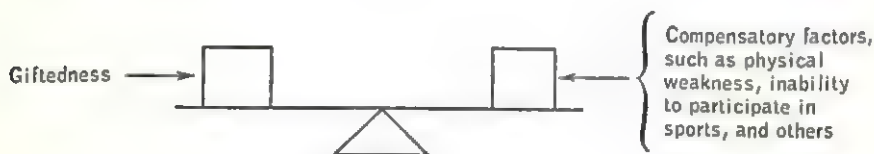
They were interested in large, scientific collections.

They read widely.

Their play performances showed interests two or three years beyond the age norm.

However, a gifted child need not necessarily have these factors in his background. If that were so we could frequently look right into the home, forget all about the child, and assume we were on the right track. That is far from the whole story!

At least one simple conclusion seems obvious on the basis of this most complete of all studies on the gifted—a child is *not* like a see-saw or a scale that is evenly balanced with abilities and disabilities perfectly matched:



Instead, the weighing-in for gifted children, *as a whole*, takes on these dimensions, with no fictitious law of compensation gumming up things:



### DEFINING THE GIFTED

Answering the question, "What is a gifted child?" in simple, brief language is not as easy as it sounds. A college graduate student recently chose as a project the search for definitions of gifted children, and without advisement, added other facets to his task, such as means for identifying the gifted, and school attitudes and policies in this field.

"Don't you think you ought to trim the job down a little bit?" he was asked.

"No, I think it'll be all right. The definitions will take just an hour



or two in the library, and then I can move on," he replied confidently.

Three weeks passed—and he came into the office, edgy, bleary-eyed, visibly shaken.

"Why didn't you tell me?" he asked, pleadingly.

"Tell you what?"

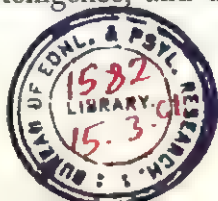
"Those definitions! They're driving me nuts! I would never have believed there were so many, that they overlapped so much, or that some were at opposite poles from others. It's impossible to make head or tail out of them."

"How many do you have so far?"

"One hundred and thirteen! And I'm not nearly finished! I've gone through most of the books, but I've just *started* on the magazine articles. There are *hundreds* of them to plow through."

He slumped in his chair, crushed by the avalanche of verbiage. But the story has a happier ending than might be expected; he dropped that part of the project and moved on to more important areas. The moral should be clear, however: Define the gifted child almost as you wish and you will find some authority to support your point of view.

If you want to restrict your definition to IQ, and set the bottom figure at 120, 130, 140, or above, you will find plenty of support. If you want to move the base down to 110, you may find as austere an outfit as the whole United States Army on your side with its Army General Classification Test score of 110 used as one of the criteria for entry to the Officer Candidate Schools. Or, suppose you want to leave IQ out entirely; you'd *still* be on safe ground, for a bulletin of the National Education Association defines giftedness as "a high order of ability to handle ideas, to produce creatively and to demonstrate social leadership." Dr. Paul Witty of Northwestern University also steers clear of IQ involvement with his reference to "one whose performance in a potentially valuable line of human activity is consistently remarkable." For her experimental work in this field, Dr. Leta Stetter Hollingworth arbitrarily chose the top 1 percent of the juvenile population in general intelligence, and tied her definition in with



the ability to deal with abstract knowledge or symbols. The definition, of course, determines the number involved too, ranging from at least 10 in 100 to fewer than 1 in 100.

You may be interested in how a few others of the 113-plus have attempted to define the gifted child within just a few words:

One with such a high measure of competency that he is able to learn more than the prescribed curriculum with the prescribed time under prescribed conditions.

One who excels in creative thinking and abstract reasoning, has a wider scope of interests and produces work of superior quality.

Those with special artistic and mechanical talents.

One with a high IQ.

Those with unusually high mental capacity, with extraordinary aptitudes for school work, and with special talents for making superior contributions to society.

A child whose mental, physical, and social traits are similar to those which are known to be representative of precocious children.

One whose mental age is considerably higher than his actual age compared with children in the general population.

And so it goes, on and on, words stringing together to point out a child many of us feel we can find by instinct or intuition. While those attributes may help, it is not that simple.

Frequently it doesn't demand complicated tests and other methods (to be listed later in this chapter) in order to begin filtering out the bright ones. An incident, a conversation, or a reaction can often start us on our way, that initial guess to be supported by more astute observations later. For example, we can begin with a little episode like this one, and go on from there.

Maybe you've heard about the little boy in the classroom whose teacher saw him diligently working at his desk, and at the same time heard him humming and tapping his foot. "How does it happen that you're doing all that at one time?" she demanded. He thought for a moment, and then replied very seriously, "I dunno, but it ain't easy!"

Or perhaps you know about the tousled 9-year-old who was overheard at a drug store telephone asking the person at the other end



whether they needed anyone to rake leaves, sprinkle the lawn, and wash the front porch. After a long pause he asked whether they were satisfied with the one doing it. The unheard reply concluded the conversation, but a man who had been standing nearby walked up to the boy and told him *he* needed someone to help out in just those ways at his home. When the boy answered that he already had a job, the man was puzzled. "But you were just applying for one," he said. "Oh, *that*," replied the boy, "that's the job I already have. I was just checking up."

One can easily conclude that the two boys in these stories were gifted for they possessed a number of traits which much research maintains are the endowment of the mentally advanced.

However, many of us are shoved off our objective guards by oral glibness or a "gift of gab," by characteristics we like in children such as friendliness or courtesy, or by a starched dress, a shiny freckled face, or eyes as blue as the deep Pacific. (A good home may even succeed in making a mentally dull child extroverted to the point that the gullible may consider him exceptionally bright!) No one, or combination of these, is necessarily enough, but any one of them (including blue eyes, or even one each of two different colors!) can be used as a starting place. What is important—before we are accused of unscientific attitudes!—is that the *starting* point makes absolutely no difference. Where it leads and how you get there are the important things.

We touched on the "where" factor in the first chapter with our discussion of what these children can do for all of us; we will go into it more deeply with later references to the education of gifted children. The "how" of identification involves testing, teacher and parent observation, and all the techniques now available to us. Right at our finger tips we have all the methods needed to find every gifted child in the country. Maybe that sounds like the boast of an educational theorist, but it is true. Do you think there is even one school or one community which would admit that it could not name its gifted children? Of course not. They can and would, and merely adding up the names could give us a list of treasures that, in com-

parison, could make Fort Knox look like a gold nugget the size of a pin head.

### THE SIGNPOSTS OF GIFTEDNESS

Many writers have attempted to single out the characteristics that add up to a gifted child. Something a little different will be tried here. Below is a composite list obtained from numerous sources, and supplemented by personal additions, of characteristics which point in the direction of giftedness. Two cautions are necessary before we start.

1. We have already stressed the vital observation that no individual characteristic, or selective group of descriptive factors, will necessarily present a perfect picture or pattern of giftedness. A child limited on the following items may possibly be gifted but subjected to strains of an emotional or other source which may stifle them.
2. A list of this kind can provide some mental anguish if ill-used, just as does a long list of affirmative attributes of the good teacher; there just is no such person—teacher or child—so let us use the list from that reference point.

To put it bluntly, here are some hints which *may* indicate a gifted child in your home or classroom. It is not infallible despite its length. It does not skim over important factors by striving for a false kind of brevity. It cannot be used without expert testing and other descriptive means. But it is a beginning that an interested parent or teacher can use right now. Don't skip along swiftly if you have a particular child in mind. Easy does it—one item at a time—check and think through all of them slowly and carefully.

So here goes:

Learned to walk and talk before the average child does, fitting words and phrases together meaningfully (keep in mind that what is fast for boys may be average for girls because girls develop faster in these early, formative years).

Is somewhat above average for his chronological age in height, weight,

physique, and physical endurance, and in specific measurements like breadth of shoulders and hips, strength of muscles, and development of lungs, with a tendency to mature early physically.

Can gain appreciation of parents—though not of a captive audience of visitors!—by performing; poise and ability to put one right word after another may, rightly or wrongly, be the first factors which attach the tag of giftedness to a child.

Has interests that are diverse, spontaneous, and frequently self-directed, accompanied by an intellectual curiosity which is broad and intense.

Had an interest in time, in yesterday-today-tomorrow, days of the week, then and now, calendars and clocks at an early age.

Often learns to read before entering school, and almost always has an early desire to read.

Possesses a reading skill higher than the average in both quality and quantity.

Collects things in an orderly manner, and frequently of a complicated or scientific nature—whether it is birds, stamps, chemicals—or pictures of current motion picture favorites.

Has hobbies which seem numerous and precocious in comparison with other children his age; may have as many as three to six different hobbies in various directions.

Possesses an interest in games and amusements somewhat in advance of others his age; may have a tendency toward occasional solitary play and work, with younger gifted children often developing imaginary playmates; likes games involving rules and system.

Uses a reasoning power that results in understanding meanings and relationships which seem premature for his age, and has abilities toward abstract, critical, and creative thinking as demonstrated through his interpretations of current events, and of international and political developments.

Shows a mature ability to express himself through the communication skills of creative writing and oral expression, through picturesque ways of getting an idea across.

Has reached the higher levels of listening with reactions to comments, genuine mental and emotional participation, and real meeting of minds—and with a relative speed of response involved.

Learns easily, with fewer explanations and less repetition by the teacher; may be less accepting than others of meaningless drill or “busy work” assignments when he feels he could be using the time profitably to move along speedily and surely.

Is able to adapt learning to various situations somewhat unrelated in orientation.

Might have behavior patterns not always acceptable, a factor which is thoroughly understandable in a society that is adjusted to the average; may be impatient and rebellious against the slower and perhaps more passive attitudes of those around him, including the adults in his home and school; may prove to be a little "difficult" as all that is interesting frequently is—whether it is a wife, a horse, a machine, or a child!

Is shown by character studies to be (1) more trustworthy when under temptation to cheat, (2) higher in honesty, (3) higher in emotional stability, and (4) more adaptable in social situations.

Shows his greater capacity through a higher achievement and mastery of school subjects, *but* his achievement might be much lower than expected just because he is bored sick at the slow pace and perhaps an uninspired teacher.

Likes school, shows a desire to learn without prodding, participates in and seems to have time for numerous extracurricular activities without their interfering with his academic achievement.

Frequently chooses the more difficult school subjects for the simple reason that he *likes* them.

Seems to be adept in analyzing his own abilities and limitations with an objective manner. An awareness or appreciation of himself may result in lack of popularity with less bright peers, and not recognizing the cause of this antagonism, he may feel a need to withdraw into himself or to adults.

Has a vocabulary beyond others of his age or grade, and in addition uses and understands the words in reading, writing, and speaking. (All children are cute and say cute things, however. A first book of first definitions by Ruth Krauss entitled *A Hole Is to Dig* illustrates that point rather conclusively. When so-called average children define things in these quotable ways, don't we have to look deeper and perhaps expect even more if we are to attach the "gifted" tag because of clever statements: "Mashed potatoes are to give everybody enough," "a party is to make little children happy," "arms are to hug with," "mud is to jump in and slide in and yell doodleedoodleedoo," "a dream is to look at the night and see things.")

Asks questions because he really wants the answers, and demonstrates that fact by the later use of information acquired through his verbal curiosity. (But don't feel that you *always* have to answer. Let's not



forget the mental health of parents—and teachers, too—who have hundreds of questions pumped at them in quick succession, hour after hour, day after day, week after week.)

Shows a high degree of originality in his play, work, planning, and adjustments to situations; this may extend to washing dishes, setting the table, helping at a barbecue, and washing the car—just bear with it in the early years, for you will wish they were back when the obstinate pre-teens roll around! How he solves his problems all through his childhood may be novel, to say the least.

Has an attention span longer than you would expect.

Creates jokes and laughs at the humor of others on a level more mature than his age indicates, often on an abstract or imaginary basis.

Prefers the companionship of older children, even though they may reject him as “a little runt among us big kids.”

May show unusual skill in art or music, carry a tune well at an early age, have a persistent desire to learn music, possess an unusual sense of rhythm, display creativity in either art or music, or show a vibrant sense of color.

Possesses no indication that, because of intelligence precocity, he is in any way antisocial, or has a negative or undersirable personality (he *may* have these characteristics, but they are not a necessary ingredient of his giftedness); is less inclined, as part of the group of bright children, to have nervous disorders or to be poorly adjusted emotionally, or to boast despite his superiority.

May look much as other children do, and frequently act as they do—and therein lies a problem. It's so easy to *overlook* them!

This list is deliberately inclusive so it can give you a more complete picture than is available from other sources. It indicates practically all the key aspects of giftedness in a society such as ours.

Maybe on the basis of some of these items you are ready to assume that the really gifted child thinks and reacts differently than does the rest of the population. You would have company in that conclusion, because as will be indicated later there are many who, because of the differences they believe gifted children have, go a long way toward the thought of providing schooling somewhat different in scope than that for all other children. However, our primary concern in this volume is *not* with children who vary that greatly; it is not with those whom Dr. Leta Stetter Hollingworth put into

the "genius" category. We can recognize her approach as expressed below, but it is far from our major problem here:

The genius differs in *kind* from the species, man. Genius can be defined only in terms of its own unique mental and temperamental processes, traits, qualities, and products. Genius is another psychological species, differing as much from man, in his mental and temperamental processes, as man differs from the ape.

She has gone much further in refining her group than we have, and our emphasis is not in the direction of this very select and small, though highly important contingent that frequently is placed in the upper stratosphere of 180 or more on a standardized IQ test.

Nor should we become involved in an argument over some kinds of words either, words like "superior," "gifted," "genius," or "exceptional." The last is now accepted as including all who deviate from the so-called normal, and what difference does it make what the exact term is anyway? It is the *idea* that counts, the idea that evolves from a child whose contribution to our society is far less than his wonderful capacity could provide. That's the problem, and that's the child—and we can no longer afford to get bogged down in definitions and confusion.

Let us also be clear in our own minds about this factor: *There is no such thing as an accurate composite of a gifted child.* Tall or short, fat or thin, leader or follower, athlete or not—he can be on either side of the fence as an *individual* and still be among the gifted as a *group*. He's entitled to his individuality, just as is the mentally retarded child, the sight or hearing handicapped youngster—or the so-called, and impossible to find, "average" child. He is entitled to be discovered and be taught and be guided as all of us are in a democracy which respects the individual and says each one should receive an education in accordance with his ability to profit from it.

While they are *different* in some ways, they are the *same* in many ways too—similar in problems and fears, in the need for love and

being wanted, in the arguments with brothers and sisters, in the importance of their education in sex understandings, in their conflicts with parents during the tough teen and pre-teen years. They monopolize the phone with seemingly foolish chatter at certain ages, stand in front of the mirror for hours admiring the first facial hair that foreshadows things to come, rock with the latest recorded rhythm, swoon to the newest Crosby, Como, Sinatra, or Presley, "suffer" through the mooning that accompanies puppy love, fall into periodic lapses of secrecy, feel occasionally that the world is the worst of all possible places, and, at a much earlier age, go through the little boy Superman and cowboy era. However, gifted children as a group have *more of the positive* and *fewer of the negative* characteristics, and they may acquire both earlier and with more intensity. Basic to all is the concept that gifted children are first of all children governed by the fundamentals of growth and development, and they should be assured the childhood which comes to each of us only once. The destructive force which harpoons them into adulthood, exploits their abilities, or distorts their security, comfort, or accomplishments should not be permitted to get in the way of the natural development of these children.

If you want to find out whether your child is gifted, use a number of the characteristics indicated, but do not expect to find all of them existing to the same degree, no matter how bright your child is. Nor is it correct for you to assume that your child is average, or below average, if some of your observations cause you to shake your head in dismal disappointment. Because no two children are alike, comparisons are also not always a fruitful basis for concluding the presence or absence of giftedness. For example, everyone may know that *that* Jimmy is smart, and since he gets all A's on his report card and so does your Jimmy, then it is perfectly clear to you that *your* child is just as gifted as that other one. But this is going at things a little too quickly, for human beings constitute one area where the geometric things-equal-to-the-same-thing-are-equal-to-each-other doesn't hold any water.

## DEVICES FOR DISCOVERY OF GIFTEDNESS

Observation of characteristics like those itemized in detail above can start us in our quest of the gifted, but numerous other means are available. Some are concrete, specific, and fairly exact. Obviously a *combination* of these means is best of all:

Group and individual mental or intelligence tests.

Scholastic achievement, preferably on the basis of standardized achievement tests; use of aptitude tests; school accomplishment lagging behind achievement test scores.

Judgments of teachers who, through their experience, have had the opportunity to observe and compare objectively—and also the judgments of other professional workers, such as the pediatrician, social worker, and Boy Scout leader.

Use of talent hunts in science, art, music, writing, and oral expression, based on both astute observation and the best achievement tests available in these areas.

School cumulative records, anecdotal materials, and grades, but *only* if the schools have had in-service or other preparation of their teachers for preparing such materials with objectivity.

A scale, or check list, based on some of the characteristics in the long list. Sociometric techniques which may point toward leadership qualities, which in turn may indicate giftedness (although not necessarily).

Self-evaluations absorbed into a framework that includes other kinds of information.

Parent evaluation, even though from the least objective source of all!

No one of these by itself can do the trick. One teacher, trying as objectively as she can, might tag Johnny as the bright one, the one headed for a brilliant legal career—but another is just as objective and just as certain that he is headed for a legal “career,” but on the wrong side of the law!

## PARENTAL OBJECTIVITY—OR LACK THEREOF

Of course, parents usually do not have most of the devices listed above, but they do have the curiosity to *know* and the overwhelm-



ing parental desire to *do* what is best. The importance of knowing whether a child is gifted cannot be stressed too much or too often. It is only reasonable for a parent to want to be aware of his child's strong and weak points, to want to know whether his eyes are poor, his hearing good, his physical strength above or below par. And just as these bits of knowledge rightfully belong to the child and his family, so does the fact of his intellect, whether it is high or low. A little later we will discuss briefly how intelligence is measured. The tests and other ways of arriving at a figure are far from exact, and for that reason one must always be skeptical of the "exact IQ," a number which in its limited confines is supposed to signify the level of a child's intelligence. The tests themselves, their cultural limitations, the persons who administer them, the physical and emotional condition of the child when he takes them—are all variables that can easily result in figures which float around within a range of 10 to 20 points. We cannot and should not tell a parent an "exact IQ." The reason is simple—there *is* no such thing!

So, even knowing his IQ, can you as a parent see your child as he *really* is? You want to, of course. And on the basis of what you know you want to do the best for him. Knowing his capacity should keep you from pushing too hard and too fast, from expecting him to work beyond his limits, whether we are talking about doing arithmetic problems, lifting weights, or solving puzzles. Conversely, if you know, at least your expectations can be high enough.

Nobody in the entire world knows your child as well as you do—his most intimate habits, his innermost desires, the fears he may even have successfully hidden from himself. And yet, nobody is *less* capable than you are of seeing him as he really is in comparison with others; even though some so-called authorities tell you it's "wrong" to compare children, you're only human and curious to see how your "production" stacks up against others in the race most of us are running for the world's wealth of mind or matter. Besides, giftedness is a relative factor based on where we are and with whom we pal around.

No, you will never be completely unbiased about your own child.

It is impossible for you to be because of the integral way in which you are bound up with him, the object of your greatest love and hope. Once you fully realize that you cannot see him in a cold, analytical manner, you will be ready to accept these two facts:

1. It is not necessary nor expected that you be objective in order to help your child reach his peak in accomplishments and satisfactions.
2. It brings a sense of relief to realize that experts on children are wrong when they indirectly force parents to keep lists of their child's vocabulary at the age of three; to feel guilty because they lose their temper when Junior runs out into a busy street or turns on all the gas jets; or to worry because they don't have fun with or enjoy their children around the clock, through colic, chicken pox, and the rest, in the welter of hundreds of questions from a 4-year-old when there is a clothes basket full of clothes to be ironed, dinner to make, and frantic calculating to figure out how to pay the milk bill, buy shoes for Junior, and eat the rest of the month with \$5.00 and eight days to go.

While you cannot attain a disinterested viewpoint toward your child, your understanding of him will increase if you know what to expect of him at various stages of his development, especially if you realize he may differ from expectations and still be perfectly normal.

Mark Twain's mother is supposed to have said that she discounted 99 percent of what he said and the rest was pure gold. If you know your child that well and see him that clearly, if you recognize the difference between inherited traits you may have difficulty changing and other qualities you *can* help change rather easily, you will be able to tell whether your child is gifted—despite the film of pride that clouds the picture.

### **THE EARLIER THEY'RE DISCOVERED THE BETTER**

It should be obvious that the earlier one knows there is a gifted child in the family the more can be done about him. But how early is it possible to tell who these children are?

Grandma notices that the baby holds his head strong and erect when she carries him at the age of 10 days. Mama's baby book has

the notation, "He took his first step today, and he won't be 11 months old until next week." Dad takes pride in the straightness with which his year old baby rolls the ball across the floor to him. Although no *single* factor is an unquestioning sign of giftedness, a child who develops more rapidly in *various* directions may be assumed to be somewhat above average in mental growth.

If your youngster turns over and crawls earlier than other children you know who have a similar background, if he is stronger, heavier, and bigger than the rest, and if he asks questions *and* is interested in the answers when others are merely asking and running away, then you can begin to think that there is more than a spark of brightness in that child. Just as in discerning brightness at any age, seeing it in the early months and years requires evidence in numerous areas, adding up to a consistent pattern of advanced acting, thinking, and participating.

When a child is older, in the pre-teen or teen ages, the differences between him and others in interests and activities may add up to one, two, or three *years*. In infants and young children the differences noted are more difficult to discern because they may be only a matter of *weeks or months*; yet an alert parent, who makes some effort at being objective and who is aware of recent writings of Gesell, Olson, and others in the field of child development, can do a fairly accurate job at an early date of placing his child in the vast expanse which includes all gifted children, or in the long range of the so-called normal.

Except under extraordinary circumstances, brightness does not occur suddenly and then disappear at a later date just as unexpectedly; instead, it is a quality that appears in somewhat obscure form during infancy, becomes more obvious and more easily noted during childhood and adolescence, and continues to provide adult contributions later on, in the form of earnings, marital adjustment, and accomplishments.

While it is possible to cite one individual who did not "live up to" earlier indications of giftedness, in that situation we must recognize one of two things: (1) The child was falsely assumed to have been

gifted in the first place, or (2) An outside influence entered to interfere with the child's developing into an adult who is the fruition of the earlier potentialities.

Studies have shown that infants respond to their environment during their first few days; if that is so, then we can assume that individuals will respond differently and the brighter ones will make more mature responses. Later, during the months of walking, first words, manipulation of eating utensils, climbing, observing details in pictures and while riding in an automobile, the gifted child will generally perform more quickly, more accurately, and more conscientiously than the others.

### TEACHER-PARENT COÖPERATION

Maybe on the basis of all the devices available to the teacher you feel that the school and its personnel are in the most favorable position for finding who these children are or perhaps you are convinced that despite the occasional lack of objectivity, the closeness of parents to their children helps them more easily identify giftedness in their own homes.

For too long parents and teachers have been wary of each other, worried that the other will stand in judgment, find fault, and lack understanding. When it comes to the gifted, or any other child, neither is a *better* judge; the observation, knowledge, and coöperation of *both* are needed to make the picture complete.

In Terman's study he asked the teachers to choose their brightest children, and through other means he verified that the teachers did a good job in selection. But teachers can be fooled by (1) the child who does good work, and who is assumed to be bright because his age is not taken into consideration (*that* work at *his* age may actually combine to indicate that he's mentally sluggish); (2) the child whose vocabulary or glibness may pull the wool over the teacher's eyes; (3) the one who combines traits of friendliness, taste, and attitudes which have particular appeal for certain adults. Obedi-



ence and no need for corrective discipline are occasional substitutes for brightness in the minds of some.

Teachers who have had experience in objective observation can sometimes be helpful not only in identifying a gifted child but also in assisting parents as they face problems in the adjustment of that child to his present children's and future adult world. However, the teacher who prides herself on her lack of bias may be way out on a subjective limb in what she chooses to write in the personnel folder or cumulative record of the child. Everything she says about Johnny may be calm and impersonal, but queerly enough, her choice of *what* to comment on may always be in the direction of cleanliness, disciplinary situations, or neatness in dressing.

No one should be surprised that a human quality like that seeps into what is supposed to be professional analysis; the important thing to remember is that both parents and teachers are limited in their objectivity, and a pooling of what they know collectively might bring effective handling of the gifted child.

### THE IQ TEST

One of the devices that can help tell the full story is the mental test. Many such tests exist and are administered to groups of children or on an individual, and obviously much more time-consuming, basis. As a general guide—as *one* of the clues for determining giftedness through indications of curiosity, initiative, analytic ability, and creativity—these tests can be effective. The intelligence quotient obtained shows the relationship of a child's mental and actual age.

If a child is 5 years old and also performs mentally on a 5-year-old level, he is average in intelligence. For convenience, his IQ is stated as 100. However, if at 5 years old he can perform on the mental level of a 6-year-old, his IQ will be above 100. A 5-year-old performing on a lower mental level of 4 years old will have an IQ below 100. These three examples look like this in formula form:

$$\frac{\text{MA (Mental Age)}}{\text{CA (Chronological age)}} \times 100 = \text{IQ}$$

$$\frac{5}{5} \times 100 = 100$$

$$\frac{6}{5} \times 100 = 120$$

$$\frac{4}{5} \times 100 = 80$$

While an IQ can help determine a child's general capacity, it does not indicate in what direction his giftedness or mental limitations reach. Nor does it necessarily show his capacity for various academic areas. While gifted children are frequently advanced in their school achievement, they *can* have reading difficulties stemming from many causes, such as emotional or physical problems. Furthermore, a high IQ must be accompanied by maturity for it to help meet certain needs; a 150 IQ is never adequate for teaching a child to read—if the child is only 2 years old!

### WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Whether we are using a test or teacher observation or parent opinion to help us find our gifted children, we occasionally hear individuals who retain long out-dated ideas regarding intellectual superiority. Hitler had them with his false "superior race" bombast. We have even had such bearers of lies in our own country, and occasionally hear of the radio or pamphlet rantings of these individuals who have neither scientific evidence nor good taste on their side. The truth is easy to find, however. The facts are clear and unmistakable.

No race, religion, or socioeconomic group has a monopoly on either intelligence or stupidity. Each group has its share of both. Although exhaustive research will support these conclusions, the picture demands further clarification. Even though all groups may produce gifted individuals, both numbers and percentages will differ.



For example, the lower socioeconomic level, representing a substantial proportion of our population, will have a larger *number* of gifted children in it than will a very select, small group from the highest socioeconomic level—although the *percentage* of giftedness from the latter may be greater.

A related factor is in finding or identifying gifted children. So often it can be done more easily among well-educated families who are alerted to this entire situation, giving the impression that those families produce a large proportion of children high on the mental scale. In addition, educated families frequently provide an environment steeped in the enrichment possibilities of travel, books, games, conversation, and many other outlets. On that basis, it would therefore be more possible for them to help children reach their intellectual capacities than is possible where the outlets are few in number and restricted in opportunity even when available.

Because so many schools use only the so-called IQ tests for identifying giftedness, another item enters which penalizes certain groups. These tests are sometimes limited to the vocabulary or activities of one socioeconomic level or section of the country; when they are administered to children different from those on whom the tests were validated, the youngsters are liable not to do very well. Perhaps they haven't seen automobiles and trains like the ones pictured, or heard or used words such as those included in a vocabulary list. Allison Davis and others have been hard at work on "culture-free" intelligence tests which presumably will show more accurately the intelligence of most or all children.

How all this affects you and your child is obvious. No matter what the color of your skin, where you live, in what church you worship, where *your* parents came from, or how much (or little) money you have, there may be a gifted child in your home.

### THE HANDICAPPED CHILD

A point which has received very little emphasis in the literature of the gifted child is that of the handicapped child and his relation-

ship to giftedness. Often asked but seldom answered are questions such as:

Does limited sight or hearing affect a child's intelligence? If so, in which direction?

What effect does cerebral palsy have on mentality?

What effect does epilepsy have on intelligence?

Of course, no general answer can be given. What is true with one child may be totally in error in the case of another. However, a child who is physically limited in one direction may compensate through time and attention given in other directions, such emphasis seeming to indicate an increase in intelligence. An alertness in the senses which remain is sometimes interpreted as wisdom instead of being viewed logically as development due to concentrated energies. If we cannot see, perhaps we seem to hear better because so much of our effort is pushed in that direction. Our sensitivities grow to compensate for our losses. But to conclude that our intelligence has also expanded is not warranted.

The situation in cerebral palsy is somewhat different, for here is an illness or limitation which appears on the surface to constrict intelligence. "Look how he shuffles!" we may hear someone say. "Can't walk or even talk. *Must* be off his rocker!" As far as the mental *capacities* of cerebral palsy persons as a group are concerned, the range of their intelligence is as lengthy as it is for any other group chosen at random. The difference is that because many persons in this category have difficulty expressing themselves and communicating, their experiences may be limited and their *apparent* intelligence may be less than it otherwise might have been. Then too, our intelligence tests do not allow for the limitations in their manual dexterity, and thus show inaccurate scores where allowances are not made for such manipulative limitations.

In epilepsy still another factor enters, for brain injury of some type causes the seizures. Several studies have established that intelligence is usually unaffected, and its range among epileptics is as extensive as it is for persons not subject to epilepsy.

## THE GIFTED CHILD AND HIS PEERS

Whether gifted children are in the other exceptional child groups just referred to, or look and act just like many other children, parents are concerned about how they will get along with others. That isn't an unusual worry. Most of us frequently find ourselves in the what-will-they-think-of-me frame of mind. Although we seldom worry because the evasive "they" will think we're too *smart*, that is the problem we build up for ourselves as far as some of our children are concerned. Sometimes it is shared by the youngsters, taking on proportions that adult minds find hard to fathom. In our grown-up days we sometimes can take snubbing in stride—but a ten-year-old has difficulty. We, as adults, frequently develop quite a facility of pretending we don't care when others leave us out—but in a teenager the feelings and tensions and hurts lie close to the surface, barely skin deep.

Adults call other adults names, directly or indirectly. So do children toward each other. They seem to receive that "trait" as it is handed down from generation to generation.

If you watch children, perhaps you have noted how unthinking they sometimes seem to be of feelings of others. Epithets related to race, culture, nationality, physical development, or any other quality which causes a child to differ from the group demonstrate this lack of sensitivity. Teasing the pathetic, little, club-footed Philip in *Of Human Bondage*, hurling "four-eyes" at the thick-lensed boy in the class, using names like "freckles," "pig-tails," and "cry baby" are examples of childish verbal barbs.

Fitting into the picture, without changing the frame one bit, are other scapegoat tags like "smarty" or "brain." It would be futile to expect bright children to be the exceptional deviant group, the only one to escape titles bestowed on those considered to be different. However, neither dislike nor ridicule is necessarily involved in this kind of name-calling; rather it may be an effort of some to compensate for their own deficiency after recognizing the superiority of the

other child. Whether the child making the statement does so viciously or the one receiving it is hurt depends on the specific individuals involved.

While gifted children may be generally superior physically and socially, few generalizations about their personality development are warranted. They are no more frequently liked as a group than so-called "average" children, nor are they always, or even usually, leaders in group activities; neither leadership nor popularity is a necessary requisite of giftedness. One study did find, however, a positive relationship between the amount of reading children do and the degree to which they were accepted by others—the more they read the more they were liked. That conclusion is certainly different from the old mistaken idea that children are spiteful and want nothing to do with the one who likes to read.

Sometimes the bright child will do what he can to be just like the rest, even to the point of not seeming to know the answers in examinations or class discussions. In an effort to subdue an inferiority he might feel because he is different in a way which is not readily accepted by the others, he may deliberately feign either stupidity or averageness. Although he believes the games and conversations in which others participate are foolish, he will pretend enjoyment of them in order to be "one of the gang." For some children solitariness is a natural and enjoyable state, but for most the companionship of those with similar interests is more to be desired.

To the gifted child the choice may resolve itself in this way: "The kids my own age are silly, and the older ones won't let me play with them. But the worst thing is playing alone. Since I can't fake my size and age, the least I can do is to pretend I don't know and am not interested in so many things. Then maybe the ones as young as I am will let me play with them."

Ridicule and teasing do not result from mental superiority by itself. Perhaps you have seen groups of children where the brightest are accepted and enjoyed right along with the rest, either in spite of or because of their differences. While they may have been called

names at first, individual personality traits will be the deciding factors as to whether that practice will continue.

#### AND IN CONCLUSION

"Only a very small proportion of the population of a country—certainly less than one per cent—makes a significant contribution to art, thought, culture, industry, everything which in our eyes constitutes the glory of a civilization." So said Lecomte du Noüy in *Human Destiny*, his exciting book of a few years ago. Even if his idea were only partly true, the thought behind it should make us want to know who our gifted children are and what we can do about them.









Father guides son . . . Mother and Dad talk things over with the teacher . . . parents remain the most concerned, the most helpful.

*Above, Art Clark and Counterpoint Productions; below, Photography Dept., Arizona State College, Tempe*

# III

## *What to Do About Them— Parents*

A WONDERFUL thing has happened in recent years, and many of us aren't even aware of it. We can become authorities on anything! It's really true. Just pick your subject—atomic or hydrogen energy, the secrets at the bottom of the oceans, engineering feats behind the world's great dams—and you can find the material that makes these complex subjects completely understandable. We are living in the "average" man's paradise, and don't know it.

Add to the list another subject—child development. Spock, Gessell, plus thousands of articles in popular magazines and newspaper series have eliminated all mystery in connection with what makes children tick. Ten minutes a day of superficial reading can put us in the "know," can help make simple any of the intricate workings of a child's mind. Or so we mistakenly think!

There is one thing wrong with this apparent windfall of information about what makes our children the way they are—the deluge of details has scared parents out of their wits. Johnny has a tantrum, and we freeze up at the thought of what we've done to bring it on. Susie has a new teen-age romantic attachment, fails to confide in us—so we tie ourselves into tight little knots of worry wondering how we've alienated her confidences. Baby Jimmy wets his bed a few nights in a row after a long dry spell, and we're sure an emotional condition in the home has brought it on.

Only one word summarizes notions of that type adequately; it dates back to a famous response you remember from the Battle of the Bulge late in World War II : "Nuts!" The encouragement parents have received to tiptoe in stocking feet in their relations with their children has to stop because it has created a tension which we certainly do not need in addition to all the other tensions of a hopped-up world. The authorities in child development and the individual professional articles are not to blame for the hazard to parental mental health that has taken place; it is rather the avalanche of advice, the constant dinning of suggestions that are responsible.

### A PARENT'S FACTS OF LIFE

So let us make a few points clear at the start as we go into the subject of parents and their gifted children.

1. *Children are tough.* They don't bruise emotionally as easily as some would lead us to believe. Fine adults have come from horrible backgrounds, and have somehow survived the pressures of inadequate food, shared family bathrooms, and miserable human relationships. Perhaps they would have become even better adults if their background had been less difficult, but who knows? Who can be sure about things like that? The point is that we ought to give a lot less thought to the harm that we do our children in a situation when our own mental health is at stake—for example, maybe something much worse can happen than a well-placed and clearly understood spanking applied when we are frightened by seeing our pride and joy run in front of a car and almost get hit. Which leads us to Point Number Two:

2. *The mental health of parents is important too.* While children seem to be temporarily sensitive to a loss or disappointment (and a series of either one *could* be dangerous), our own lives are also involved in the picture. As parents we are not on the scrap heap yet, and our feelings, hopes, ambitions, and also *our* losses and disappointments, should not be discounted. "All for the children," says

a German phrase, but as long as parents still have a toehold, perhaps it's not quite "all" yet. So the hint to relax in parenthood might fall on receptive ears, for the millions of words pumped at us in an advisory tone certainly do not add up to that idea. And that is part of Point Number Three:

3. *Nothing that we plan for our children—gifted or otherwise—is nearly as vital for their growth as the free things we have for them.* Those free things include the phrases we toss around in the field of education—provide a *climate* for growth, accept the *differences and limitations* of children, *respect* their ideas as we would those of other adults, give whatever *time* we can. Of course, there are many other things we can do, both inexpensive and otherwise, but they'll fall into place as we go on. Glibly spoken or not, those statements make good sense, and we have to get back to the essentials behind them.

### DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Relaxation with a problem frequently comes through doing something about it. Bringing an end to stewing in our own inactivity results in less wringing of hands and more of the thought, "Well, at least I'm getting something done!" The smarter parents of gifted children are finding out that is so through the many activities in which they are involved. Here are a few examples:

1. One of the school districts in Phoenix hadn't made much of a start on its gifted child situation until a few years ago when some of the parents decided that this "baby state" was getting too big for its crib, and something had to be started. So they talked their school into a committee setup, immediately volunteered with a few teachers for one of the committees, and started to work on the exceptional child picture.

They began with the mentally retarded child, sparked a bonfire of interest which resulted in a special classroom for the more severely retarded but educable children, and then moved on to their real objective. A vast library of materials from all over the country



was gathered, and their zeal led them into lengthy discussions with their own teachers and administrators. It wasn't long before other districts wanted to hear from three of the mothers who had been the strongest catalyst, and they set up a lengthy schedule of appearances as a panel all over the Phoenix area "Valley of the Sun." "It's almost like a sister act!" one of them confided gleefully.

2. A one-time attendance at a meeting helped a father of a very bright child. He attended a session of a regional conference of the International Council for Exceptional Children, and felt comfortable enough to admit his problem. It centered on his feeling that he couldn't keep up with—mentally or economically—the needs of his youngster. "I don't have the time, the brains, or the money. I'm just not adequate for the job," he said wearily.

Within a very few minutes he had as his own a sensitively explained Point Number Three (see page 45) from a professional counselor who recognized his need and the tensions that had been building up unnecessarily. "Relax in the love and respect you have for this wonderful child of yours," was the theme of her remarks. "Keeping up" with relatives, friends, neighbors—or children—is an impossibility anyway, and this father who was himself much brighter than he recognized understood and accepted that idea rather quickly. One of the things that more parents of gifted children ought to realize is that in neither heredity nor environment did these children develop their intelligence in a vacuum. As Dr. F. E. Lord of Los Angeles State College has so pointedly said, "There has been a strong suspicion for a long time that parents have something to do with children!"

3. Another example of parental desire to do something has been vividly demonstrated by the large number of parents who have shown *active* interest in a new Arizona Association for Gifted Children. They have flocked to meetings, devoured materials, made suggestions for organizational plans. They have left behind their frustrated selves who read without real understanding or worried without any possibility of a solution. Sharing ideas, encouraging school boards, meeting with teachers and administrators—all of



these have loosened the bonds of gloomily feeling that there was nothing to do but wish that a delightful gifted child were "normal." And this kind of activity has blossomed out in every part of the country.

4. Of course, there are always the thousands of parents who solve this problem on an individual basis. They are not speakers or meeting-goers, nor do they fret over the conflicting advice of the weekly and monthly magazines. Instead, they know their child, their school, their teachers and principals, their community—and mainly, themselves. They recognize their own human limitations and accept them. They are aware of the ways in which their child is both similar to and different from other children. They have done their best to bring into their homes the enjoyment of a full life within the limitations of their energy and income. More and more parents join their ranks each year, and through the ideas in this chapter perhaps there will be some additional converts.

### GUIDEPOSTS AHEAD!

If you've read this far, you are not subject to the home "disease" of indifference to the problem. Perhaps it is hard for you to realize it, but there *are* parents who don't know they have a gifted child. They care as much as you do, but it just never occurred to them—and because of that insensitivity, the youngster is dragging along in a home that is doing him the dirty trick of neglecting a literal treasure in its midst.

Sometimes there is a psychological basis for the indifference, a subconscious feeling of being threatened or of resentment at having one's own child possess the potentialities of adult fulfillment the parent dreamed of but never reached. You know parents like that—they always wanted to be a lawyer or doctor or teacher, and couldn't make it because of financial or mental limitations, so underneath it all they resent the child who seems to have the world at his finger tips.

No, of course, they don't admit that—or even recognize it! But

the attitude crops to the surface in their indifference to giftedness which is obvious even to the casual observer. It is difficult for most parents to recognize that this kind of callousness exists because of their own tendency to center so much of their dream of the future on their child, whether or not he is bright.

The other side of the picture is the "pusher," the parent who also was dissatisfied with his own lack of attainment and seeks fulfillment through his offspring. Whether it is school, vocational attainment, or marital riches, he wants the best, and the "best" implies that whatever the child is capable of just is not good enough. Exploitation of a child is a serious offense, and sometimes very hard to recognize when the child is our own. Perhaps our inability to see things through any eyes other than ours causes the problem—but the youngster is the one who suffers.

Another chronic worrier among our parents is the one who wants to be sure Junior mixes, is one of the gang. If Junior is shy, he worries—if Junior wants to be alone, he worries—if Junior doesn't want to play baseball, pandemonium breaks loose! This—like so many other parental ills—calls for recognition of a basic educational principle which is so simple, and yet so often overlooked: All children are different. They can be different and yet completely normal. *Shyness*, an excellent McGraw-Hill film, states the case admirably by pointing out that some shy children need real help while others may be perfectly well adjusted and have a charm that we destroy by trying to make them gregarious. And when it comes to baseball, is it really essential that everyone like baseball equally well as both a participant and an observer? Why should they? For each child we naturally want the kind of balanced life that makes it happy for *him* and not for an imaginary gallery of onlookers. Basically, no one except those most close to us is interested in what we do, and how we do it, anyway.

Maybe from all this we can develop a point of view about attitudes toward our own gifted children, a simple list of guideposts that will help ease them into a well-adjusted adulthood. We have to realize that we don't control the entire environment, and that at

best our contribution is limited. But since it is the most important occupation we have—and based on no preparation at all for the vast majority of us—let us see what these guides are.

1. *Respect* for the child, for his feelings, desires, interests, and ambitions—but tempered by the fact that we are his parents and have to provide the limitations and the guidance.
2. *Listening* to the child, to his experiences, questions, and problems—but he has to listen too. That's the kind of world in which we live.
3. *Enjoyment* with the child—but we should stop feeling guilty if we fail to enjoy him around the clock every day. No one likes anybody *that* much!
4. *Planning* with the child, through the fun of a family council—but there are frequent times when daddy or mom is boss, and rightfully so because of their wider experiences, and because of their broader awareness of what will preserve the health and safety of all.
5. *Acceptance* of the child—but that certainly does not mean that we overlook what he is capable of doing, which may be far beyond his present accomplishment; or that we condone laziness, which is a very common affliction of gifted children in our society. However, we can at least accept the fact that they have similar growing pains to most other children.
6. *Affection* for the child—but who doesn't have it for his own? The problem comes in the overdose, the hand that is constantly straightening a collar and the voice that frets over food left on a plate.
7. *Setting an example* for the child, through what we say, how we say it, how we act in the family group and also in broader circles—but this is nothing to be concerned about because our objective in this short life of ours should be to become the best kind of person we can, whether or not a little fellow is looking up at us to take his cues from our actions.
8. *Recognition* of achievement because it encourages further accomplishment—but let's not smother the creative talents of our

gifted by praise for activities which they took right in stride before our words attached undue importance to them. Although success usually brings on more success, it can also make some bright children feel, "I'm pretty good and maybe it's time to slack off!"

9. *Understanding* the capacities of our child—but also knowing that the ways of measuring those capacities are limited in their accuracy even though they can at least point in a reasonably clear-cut direction. Both mental and physical limits, understood fully through the help of pediatricians and other professional persons, are needed, and should be seen clearly. A child is expected to be child-like—that's where the shimmering, and too quickly snuffed out, beauty of childhood lies—and yet we foolishly apply judgments on adult levels to his art work, to his attention span, and to his ability to reason.

### WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

In our own ways we expect our children to do what we as adults are frequently incapable of accomplishing, encouraging them to act like grownups while we continue in our daily endeavors to bicker and bloat on a childish level. With gifted children the difficulty is increased because modesty and humility are not necessarily natural ingredients of the abilities of our bright children. John Stuart Mill's father, as indicated in Mill's autobiography, had one solution:

He kept me, with extreme vigilance, out of the way of hearing myself praised, or of being led to make self-flattering comparisons between myself and others. From his own intercourse with me I could derive none but a very humble opinion of myself; and the standard of comparison he always held up to me, was not what other people did, but what a man could and ought to do. . . . I was not at all aware that my attainments were anything unusual at my age.

In most cases that would be carrying things too far, but it is just as dangerous to bend over in the other direction—at the bridge club where you force your child to perform or put on some kind of

musical, recitation, or other show; at the dining room table where you play at being democratic by asking opinions of everyone and then following through on those of only mama and papa; or in the back-fence conversations where you are always making personal comparisons and Junior, in every way, comes out way ahead of all the other children.

But parents can do plenty about a gifted child along an affirmative line. A book in one of the world's oldest religions provides this lead: "Limit not thy children to thine own ideas. They are born in a different time." Isn't the implication clear in this statement that change is one of things of which we can be sure, and that we are certain to be wrong if we assume our children will grow up in the same environment and with the same needs that we had?

So, bury your indifference, control your feelings of inadequacy, toss the doors open *wide*, and let in the following 10 kinds of help.

1. *A nursery school*—whenever you and a reputable nursery school teacher feel your child is ready around the age of three or four. But watch out for the fly-by-night, store-front variety! Availability within your income bracket is also obviously a key point.
2. *Crayons, water colors, finger paints, picture books, blunt scissors, and paste*—put your emphasis on variety, color, and different materials and textures. Washable ones will help your mental health!
3. *Books of all kinds for which the child is ready*—comic books (if that is where he is now, then let them lead him into something better), library books, cheap books you buy, more expensive books for special occasions, books that represent his current interests and others that open up new channels, books he can tear and write in, books he can cherish, go to bed with, and enjoy when he first gets up in the morning. Important places in the reading picture are occupied by print and pictures he likes to look at or, later on, read, the ones he wants you to read to him, and the observations he makes of his family reading for its own enjoyment and information.



More and more parents are finding the fun there is in reading to and with children.

Whether or how to select an encyclopedia may become a problem. Usually an indication of the best one will come through the observations of an alert teacher who is aware of which one has been and can be used most effectively. Often it is wise to wait until almost the time that an adult edition can be used. The always important money factor will indicate the best timing in most families. We may not like that idea, but it's true—isn't it?

4. *Television*—with the tremendous exposure it gives to the lives of others, the places where they live, the vocabulary and language different from his own, new areas into which his reading interests may expand. His ability to be selective and critical depends on you; you don't help much if you are a "10 A.M.-to-midnight-regardless-what's-on" watcher yourself. And there are the radio and the movies (all, of course, in moderation!) with the same kind of potentialities for expanding a child's horizons.
5. *Conversation*—or don't you have time? You're not always in the mood when the deluge of questions comes, but maybe sometimes you have the habit of feigning time limitations when in actuality the other thing you are doing could easily be postponed. And you *do* have a lot to say to him on the basis of your background of experience; you've lived so much longer, seen so many things, met so many people. The accumulation is tremendous when you stop to think about it.
6. *So many other kinds of enrichment*—trips to the zoo, ball games, picnics, museums, circus, fire station, post offices, police stations, all kinds of stores; rides on a bus, elevated, street car, train, subway; taking him to the airport, art centers, flower shows, concerts, children's plays. Takes time, you say—and you're right, of course, but are you sure that many of the things you're doing with that precious time are more important *and* more enjoyable? Spreading these visits out over



a period of time, can't two parents coöperate, and what about sharing your trips with the neighbors sometimes so that you don't have to be on all of them?

Into this topic also come the lessons in music, dancing, horseback riding, swimming or whatever the child shows an aptitude or interest toward. Two cautions jump out at us right away: (a) Many interests are dormant or nonexistent, and we have to be alert to the possibilities we can bring into these absorbent young lives; (b) the ubiquitous money problem comes up again, and if it is a choice of lessons or the family making ends meet, let's decide in favor of the family every time!

7. *Objects that promote ingenuity*—orange crates, cardboard boxes, pieces of wood, and other objects to put together, take apart, and shape into various forms. Hammers, nails, saws, and screw drivers may come in handy tool

Maybe that scares you, but we have the word of one first grade teacher with more than 30 years of experience that these tools are less dangerous in the hands of youngsters than they are when handled by adults. The children learn how to use them correctly, while with adults there is sometimes the assumption that they know how when in reality their experience was limited, long ago, and even then without proper guidance.

8. *Games that are fun first of all*—and also, help them reason, understand, coöperate. You can't turn them loose among a complicated set of puzzles, however; help them get started, and then be willing to bow out as soon as they can figure out what they are supposed to do and have an interest in doing it.
9. *Summer camps or play camps*—Gradually untie the strings that bind your children to you so that the separation is healthful for them and painless to you.
10. *The activities in which you are interested*—Don't be selfish about your hobbies, but on the other hand you shouldn't be

pushy about them either. If you like bicycle races, track meets, musical comedies, and art shows, you may be surprised how favorably inclined your children might be toward them. Of course, this all assumes a sound relationship between you and them, leading to this kind of reasoning: They love you—you like these activities—they like these activities. Maybe this reasoning reminds you of the shiny days before you were married; maybe he or she enjoyed rowing or canoeing, a sport which seemed a little bit silly to you then and even more so now, but you went along, and found that the company involved made you look at it through different eyes. You may not realize it, but your children are often like that with you, except perhaps for those adolescent years when *whatever* you do is wrong!

A cautionary note is necessary on this point—there's no need for you to be a martyr; if you really dislike baseball or football, then don't go to games because you think it is some kind of parental obligation. Children have the telescopic vision to see through that kind of fakery.

The list could be continued, with emphasis on a balanced work, play, and reading program; on contributing to both the brain and body; on noting special abilities or talents and then not letting them be wasted. But we cannot leave this list as it stands without stating two pertinent points.

*Books and many of the other items in the list cost money.* Since that is a commodity we all seem to have very little of these days, you may be ready to toss all these suggestions out without a second glance. Wait a few seconds before you do it! Take a while to check back through the list and note the *many* ideas and objects which have no or a very low price tag attached to them.

*Being with a child takes time.* So does earning a living. So do sleeping and eating. Something has to give under pressure like this, and maybe you feel it's to be the child, gifted or not. Facing the situation in bold relief like that, you may not be so willing to sacrifice your child's future without a fight on your part to make it

full, happy, and healthful. Maybe a quick survey of your weekly schedule, with a list of choices involved, will give you more time with that warm little hand in yours, with his words listened to and responded to fully instead of in competition with the sports page or the latest telephone gossip. Besides, the activities listed do not all require *your* time. It is just as important to guard jealously the free play time of children. They deserve the chance to develop their interests away from you too.

A famous writer, Rachel Carson, delved into enrichment of a child's life through a memorable article entitled "Help Your Child to Wonder" which appeared in *Woman's Home Companion*, July, 1956. As in her better known book *The Sea Around Us* she sensitively and beautifully pointed out what most of us are too busy to see for ourselves. Here she uses a child's-eye view, so difficult for adults of lesser abilities than she to accomplish:

We have let Roger [her nephew] share our enjoyment of things people ordinarily deny children because they are inconvenient, interfering with bedtime or involving wet clothing that has to be changed or mud that has to be cleaned off the rug. We have let him join us in the dark living room before the big picture window to watch the full moon riding lower and lower toward the far shore of the bay, setting all the water ablaze with silver flames and finding a thousand diamonds in the rocks on the shore as the light strikes the flakes of mica embedded in them. I think we have felt that the memory of such a scene, photographed year after year by his child's mind, would mean more to him in manhood than the sleep he was losing. He told me it would in his own way, when we had a full moon the night after his arrival last summer. He sat quietly on my lap for some time, watching the moon and the water and all the night sky. Then he snuggled closer and whispered, "I'm glad we comed."

Miss Carson's ideas on a child's world cannot help but make us think a little bit of what we are depriving our own children, often needlessly:

A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood. If I had influence with the good

fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.

If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder without any such gift from the fairies, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in. Parents often have a sense of inadequacy when confronted on the one hand with the eager, sensitive mind of a child and on the other with a world of complex physical nature, inhabited by a life so various and unfamiliar that it seems hopeless to reduce it to order and knowledge. In a mood of self-defeat, they exclaim, "How can I possibly teach my child about nature—why, I don't even know one bird from another!"

I sincerely believe that for the child, and for the parent seeking to guide him, it is not half so important to *know* as to *feel*. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. The years of early childhood are the time to prepare the soil. Once the emotions have been aroused—a sense of the beautiful, the excitement of the new and the unknown, a feeling of sympathy, pity, admiration or love—then we wish for knowledge about the object of our emotional response. Once found, it has lasting meaning. It is more important to pave the way for the child to want to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not ready to assimilate.

If you are a parent who feels he has little nature lore at his disposal there is still much you can do for your child. With him, wherever you are and whatever your resources, you can still look up at the sky—its dawn and twilight beauties, its moving clouds, its stars by night. You can listen to the wind, whether it blows with majestic voice through a forest or sings a many-voiced chorus around the eaves of your house or the corners of your apartment building, and in the listening, you can gain magical release for your thoughts. You can still feel the rain on your face and think of its long journey, its many transmutations, from sea to air to earth. Even if you are a city dweller, you can find some place, perhaps a park or a golf course, where you can observe the mysterious migrations of the birds and the changing seasons. And with your child you can ponder the mystery of a growing seed, even if it be only one planted in a pot of earth in the kitchen window.



Exploring nature with your child is largely a matter of becoming receptive to what lies all around you. It is learning again to use your eyes, ears, nostrils and fingertips, opening up the disused channels of sensory impression.

For most of us, knowledge of our world comes largely through sight, yet we look about with such unseeing eyes that we are partially blind. One way to open your eyes to unnoticed beauty is to ask yourself, "What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?"<sup>1</sup>

At one point she sums up her presentation with these few words: "Children delight in small things because they are closer to the ground than we."

#### FORMAL EDUCATION—MAY PARENTS ENTER?

"This is as far as you come, and you come no further!"

So said the strict ramrod of a kindergarten teacher of some years ago to a parent bringing the 5-year-old for his first day in school. Unfortunately, there are some who still believe in that thou-shalt-not-pass philosophy. However, most of the modern teachers not only permit the parents to enter when their children are first starting school, but encourage them to do so. This is all too big an adjustment in the lives of 30 to 50 little people for one adult to take alone; the smart teacher gets all the assistance she can find to help make the adjustment gradual and pleasant.

Schools are considered to be part of the community these days, and the first enrichment resource most good teachers think of is the parent. The parent's understanding of the background of the individual child, plus the travel, occupational, and other kinds of information which he or she can bring into the classroom environment to *all* the children, are resources too valuable not to be used. Maybe you've heard about the "two-by-four" teacher, luckily on her way to well-warranted oblivion, who would probably

<sup>1</sup> Rachel Carson, "Help Your Child to Wonder," *Woman's Home Companion*, July, 1956, pp. 26, 46-47. Copyright © 1956 by Rachel Carson. Reprinted by permission of the author.



not use this kind of enrichment—the one who restricts the children to the two covers of a single textbook and the four walls of the classroom!

You *do* have a place in the school environment of your child; you're one of the experts who can contribute to a well-rounded education for that youngster. And if he is gifted, your opportunities and obligations take on added importance in several directions.

Let's consider a few of the questions you might have in mind about the handling of your child, questions which you could actually ask the teacher or administrator (assuming, of course, that you have good rapport with them).

1. "Has thought been given to ways for handling gifted children to keep them from getting bored and to encourage them to do their best work?"

Such "ways" include enrichment of the program in the regular classroom organization, special classes or partially special classes for the gifted, and acceleration or "skipping." The first is the preferred current practice, the second is sometimes used effectively in large school systems, and the third might be put into operation successfully on a limited basis. We will discuss all of them, and others, in detail later.

2. "What can I do to help enrich the program?"

One writer says gifted children are sometimes permitted to "languish in idleness"; aren't you eager to keep your own and other children from being retarded, wasted, and uninspired to that extent?

3. "Will it help you if we bring other agencies into the picture, such as the PTA, community social agencies, guidance centers?"

You can add to that list any to which you belong, as well as others with which you would be able to establish contact.

4. "It sounds like a good idea to enrich the program for these gifted children. But what do you *mean* by enrichment?"

This is a particularly good question. It should be used to make sure that enrichment is not defined as merely harder problems and more of them, rather than a broader base of activity and

contact with numerous personalities, materials, and other resources.

5. "Do the teachers *really* believe in the John Masefield statement which says that the days that make children happy also make them wise? Do they recognize the uniqueness of each child? Or is their most frequent contribution to teaching of the gifted a gripe about having so many children and so little time?"

At first these particular questions should perhaps be more the basis for observation than action, more thought than spoken.

Another fertile direction of activity for parents interested in gifted children is to know about, and perhaps become members of organizations concerned with the gifted child and who would welcome their support and participation. Three of the best-known are the following:

The American Association for Gifted Children, Inc., 15 Gramercy Park, New York 3, New York.

The International Council for Exceptional Children, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

The National Association for Gifted Children, 409 Clinton Springs Avenue, Cincinnati 17, Ohio.

Less formal neighborhood and parent groups are also available or can be set up, and through speakers, films, and discussions of their own, the information they need can come to them. Libraries and nearby colleges and universities are always willing to help.

### WHAT ABOUT YOUR OTHER CHILDREN?

With all this emphasis on the gifted child—the one who is usually most neglected—perhaps you are assuming the answer about your other children will be, "Don't worry about them. They'll manage. It's this 'special' child who needs most of your attention."

That response would be totally wrong. We have never known a child (gifted or not) who could not profit from parental guidance. There is no child who can thrive healthfully without love and

security. No little boy or girl—or grown man or woman, for that matter—can develop most successfully in an independent manner, vacuum-wise, completely separated from those who love him most and understand him best. And giftedness has nothing to do with these basic needs.

What you do about your other children depends on the most obvious factor of all—the children themselves. No two are alike, even within the same family. How many times have you heard parents say, “I can’t understand why they should be so different. After all, they grew up in exactly the same environment, and with the same parents.” If you think about it for a moment, you will understand that they are wrong on both counts. It was not the same environment if the first was two in 1945 when the parents were carrying the strains associated with a tremendous war, and the other was two in 1955 when the adults in the family had entirely different problems and attitudes. Both the environment and the parents themselves have changed.

In addition, only one child in the family is ever the oldest one, with all the obligations that go with that status; except for that child, all the others will be the youngest for varying periods of time, and one youngster will have that status for the rest of his life. Neither the oldest nor the youngest will face the pressures of the child or children caught in the middle. Look at the situation through the eyes of the youngsters themselves, and see whether they really do grow up in the same environment.

The gifted, the so-called normal, and the one or ones who may be lower on the intellectual scale need some of the same growth contributors, like praise, feelings of success, and knowledge that they are wanted. They all need the opportunity to grow with comparative freedom, but still have someone who will give them a hug when they skin their knees. They all need the chance to realize fully their potential capacities, but you have to be the one who knows that Johnny requires praise for writing his name accurately at the age of seven, while Jimmy can safely be encouraged to write stories by the time he has reached that age. That’s how they all

are—the same in some of their basic needs, and yet different in the way those needs find outlets.

Equally applicable to all is this bit of advice: Know of what each of your children is capable as an individual, and then expect only that which he is capable of attaining.

If you are a mother or father who is sure that you treat all your children identically, perhaps you ought to ask yourself whether that is wise—or whether it would be better to act somewhat differently toward each one, adapting those differences to the individual and changing needs which the children display. There is no special satisfaction in sameness when the “commodity” varies so greatly.

### RAISING YOUR CHILD'S INTELLIGENCE

While not usually a question raised by parents of gifted children, an inquiry is sometimes phrased in these words: “Is there any way of increasing my child’s intelligence?” That would be a good trick, and yet it actually is no trick at all if seen in the proper perspective.

It can be done, say most of the authorities, if what you are talking about is the possibility of increasing your child’s intelligence toward his capacity. If we assumed that a child’s intelligence is static, and that nothing we do through education, books, recordings, or other forms of enrichment could increase the level of appreciation and understanding, then isn’t there something futile about all the efforts of both parents and teachers toward an expansiveness which may not even be possible?

How one thinks, what one reads, the ways in which one reacts to various situations are all results of environment as it is added to the inherited possessions with which one enters this world. We all grow at different rates, but if we are reasonably normal, at least we know that we *do* grow; one of the factors of growth involved is intelligence—and parents as a group are capable of doing more about it than many assume.

The authorities differ on the number of so-called IQ points that can be added by the richest kind of experiences, but some of them

say as many as 10 to 20 points; on the other hand, an extremely restrictive environment might pull the child down that many points from his level of an early age. It would take an environment of almost complete deprivation to bring a child down to the lowest figure, however.

Some of the studies in this field have presented a fascinating possibility: Choose your own occupation high on the scale, and your children will be bright! Maybe that sounds foolish, but here's how the figures look in one of the studies, the one reported by Terman and Merrill in their book, *Measuring Intelligence*; the figures in the columns refer to IQ's:

Father's Occupational Classification	Chronological Ages			
	2-5½	6-9	10-14	15-18
1. Professional	116.2	114.9	117.5	116.4
2. Semi-Professional and Managerial	112.4	107.3	112.2	116.7
3. Clerical, Skilled, and Retail Business	108.0	104.9	107.4	109.6
4. Rural Owners	99.1	94.6	92.4	94.3
5. Semi-Skilled, Minor Clerical, and Minor Business	104.3	104.6	103.4	106.7
6. Slightly Skilled	95.1	100.0	100.6	96.2
7. Day Laborers, Urban and Rural	93.6	96.0	97.2	97.6

Obviously the Intelligence Quotients listed above are averages, and the range for each occupational group is extensive and overlaps other groups. Furthermore, a bright parent may have a bright child regardless of the occupation in which that parent earns a living. We are certainly sophisticated enough on this whole subject to realize a few indisputable facts supported by a whole rash of research:

1. While bright parents may possess a *tendency* to have children close to their own intellectual levels, due to both the heredity and environment involved in their parenthood, the numerous exceptions make it increasingly difficult to generalize.
2. Occupational choices are incidental to the subject, because regardless of occupations involved, the child relates back to the parents as total persons.



3. The old "law" of filial regression expressed by Sir Francis Galton remains in the literature for our consideration. It maintains that parents in their physical and mental digressions will tend toward having children who digress in the same directions, but not to the same extent. That idea can be applied to giftedness just as well as it does to color of eyes, height, or weight. "All other things remaining equal" steps in, of course, to temper any snap judgments we may be tempted to make.

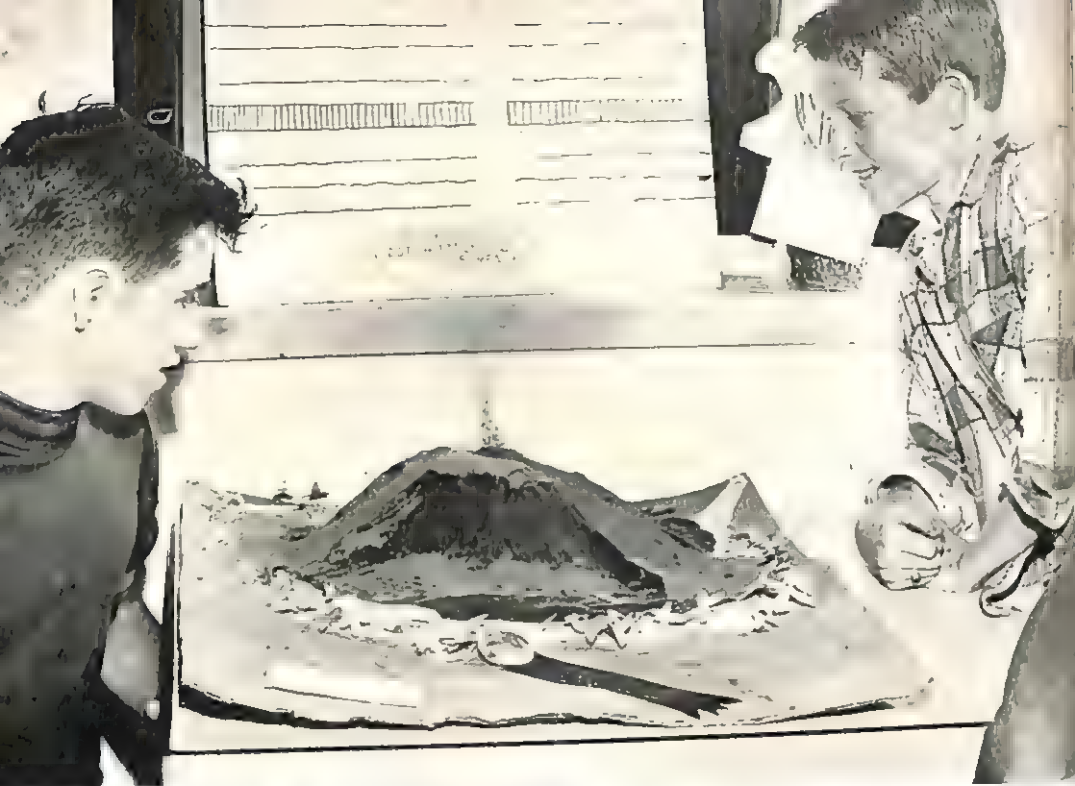
Whom the child has for a parent will dictate whether the child's intelligence will be used to its capacity, or whether the iceberg situation is to exist—only the tip visible and the mass of potentialities submerged, never to appear, and melting as time and the world close in on it. He can't choose his parent, but that parent *can* help provide the atmosphere that becomes a setting for the development of a youngster. The soil has to be right, and so do the climate, the neighbors, and the original seed. From then on it's all in someone else's hands, but it's still our job as parents to carry the burden well into a child's future.

### AND THEN COMES SCHOOL

We're so fortunate that the responsibility can be shared. While there are many who feel that the school through its kindergarten and nursery school extensions is going too far into the home's job, most parents welcome their help. It isn't just from a selfish point of view either. They want the advice, ideas, and suggestions of experts—and the biggest professional group in the entire world is available to assist with the three big A's of Affection, Acceptance, and Achievement. Parents provide the foundation; the school helps build the strong structure that until now has too frequently been limited for our gifted children. Parental encouragement is a major force in bringing the action many of our schools have begun.







Opportunities to explore, expand, enrich . . . all these and much more our modern schools are doing for gifted children.

*Above, Agnes Rothlisberg and Papago School, Phoenix; left, Howard Soule and Lowell School, Phoenix*

# IV

## *What to Do About Them— Elementary Schools*

"You were in the driver's seat! Why didn't you make us work harder? Why didn't you encourage us to stay in school? How could you let us get so lazy?"

The old saying is that doctors bury their errors; lawyers jail theirs. But for teachers the mistakes of the past keep coming back to question and taunt them. The bright child who never finished high school, the one who now works at the manual end of bridge building when he was capable of designing bridges, the lad who sells ties in a department store when he had the potential for owning the store—these are the youngsters (multiplied by hundreds of thousands) who have some serious questions to ask their parents, teachers, and communities.

It is no consolation in a fabulously rich country to answer that we had too many children in our classroom, our testing program was inadequate for finding them, or we were forced to spend more time with the slow end of the scale. They just won't buy those excuses—and they're right.

The facts are that we have available to us all the techniques, materials, and educational skills for doing the job right. We have the money too. But we're caught in the kind of situation that all of us reach once in a while—too much to do, too many possibilities, too



varied a selection of solutions, so some of us stand still, scared to move, frozen to the spot.

We worry because we think it is undemocratic (or are fearful that others think so) if we propose anything special for the gifted. How silly that concern is becomes apparent when we think of our school glee clubs, dramatics, football teams, and newspapers. Each capitalizes on some particular set of skills, each singles out a group of students for special attention and handling, and each justifies its activities on the basis of what the young people get from them. It's so reasonable, valuable, and—yes!—democratic to develop the potentialities of their participants. And so it must be with whatever we do with our gifted, with no need for a defense or apology.

"There is nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals,"<sup>1</sup> makes such good sense that we wonder how we've ever been pushed into a corner of having to justify our doing something with and for gifted children. And this related idea is just as sensible: "Somehow equality of opportunity for all has been equated with identity of opportunity for all. Nothing could be more contradictory to one of the major concepts of our American educational and political philosophy. The development of each and every individual to his fullest is at once the basis of our effort as well as our goal."<sup>2</sup>

Smart? Of course it is, and most of our teachers and administrators basically agree with that reasoning. They agree when they talk about individual differences among children, when they develop units of work which capitalize on the various abilities of children, and when they attempt to "take the child where he is" in his educational, emotional, and physical development. Within the limitations of an over-supply of children and an under-supply of materials and space, most teachers mean it when they agree with the idea of making school meaningful to each child, *including* the gifted one, and each day happy as well as productive.

<sup>1</sup> Marian Scheifele, *The Gifted Child in the Regular Classroom*, New York Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Paul F. Brandwein, *The Gifted Child as Future Scientist*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955, pp. XIII-XIV.

All you have to do is walk into many classrooms with interest centers, pupil-planned bulletin boards, flexibility in room organization, and warmth of good feeling between teachers and children to realize that efforts *are* being made to meet the needs of each child. Together with their administrators and school boards, and in close contact with the concerned mothers and fathers of their children, teachers are seeking the best ways to satisfy these needs.

However, they are arriving at some tantalizing conclusions which pose answers just beyond their grasp: *No single method of teaching is necessarily best for all gifted children. No particular school or classroom organization will meet all their needs. No clear-cut personality type makes the best teacher for the gifted. No simple solution suits all schools or communities.*

At that point it is probably very easy to say, "So why talk about it anymore? Let's just curl up again in our comfortable little rut of day-to-day routinized teaching, and forget the whole thing." Fortunately for all of us it is too late to turn back the clock to teaching methods that were based exclusively on routine, the same amount of drill for all, and the same program for each new group as long as they are in the same grade as the one which just moved on. We are too well-informed not to be concerned because a youngster is doing average or even better than average work. We now know there is such a student as an "under-achiever," one who is stopping short of his capacity; we have ways to find him, and through our classroom and specialized guidance we hope to bring him closer to his potential.

It doesn't take an expert to see warning signs of danger in a child or in a classroom. When the child is bright and we add an ingredient of daydreaming to excess, pestering any child or adult around him, truancy or petty vandalism, short attention span or no spark of interest at all, or reading far beneath his intellectual capacity, everybody involved (and that obviously includes a lot of people: the teacher, parents, the teachers who had and will have him, his current administrator and the one he will have, and all the folks in his community) has been given the warning. Being bright

isn't enough now and it never was. It won't get a youngster into college and *keep* him there. It won't open the door to a job without the advice that it is a swinging door which goes both ways.

The schools are fully aware of the seriousness of their task. Ruth Strang has stated that they "cannot be content to intone, 'Forward! March! Two-three-four!' to students who, intellectually speaking, have wings on their feet."<sup>3</sup> Writing; talking; experimenting; exchanging ideas within schools, districts, and at national conventions; bringing parents and the children themselves into the planning keep educational hands and minds busier than ever with ways of channeling and challenging their gifted children. The many resent the hysteria of the few and know that with time the energetic and practiced hands of good teachers will develop ideas that work. And they are not worried because the ideas and plans need changing often; that is the nature of this education business and they know it.

Over all their work is the unbendable threat as stated by Alfred North Whitehead: "In the conditions of modern life, the rule is absolute: the race which does not value trained intelligence is doomed."

### ROUND AND ROUND WE GO

Both Shakespeare and Gertrude Stein had punch lines which can help set us straight at this point. "What's in a name?" and "a rose is a rose is a rose," both release us from the bind that could so easily stifle us when we mention some of the terms so lightly used in the study of gifted children. Enrichment, acceleration, skipping, special classes, segregation, partial segregation, early school entry, flexible school entry, extracurricular activities, separate schools, selective placement, homogeneous grouping, heterogeneous grouping—the list is intriguingly long. Now let us take a searching look at the major ones.

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Strang, "The Mental Diet of Our Gifted Children," *NEA Journal*, May, 1955, p. 265.

## SEGREGATION

The dice are really loaded when the word "segregation" is used. "How undemocratic can you get? Even the Supreme Court ruled against *that*!" And if the thought had ever occurred to you as far as gifted children are concerned you begin to slink into corners and avoid your friends. The dictionary won't help you much either with its definitions of segregate as "set apart, separate, select, seclude, isolate." But, you begin to think, "I just want to help the youngster who has been neglected, just as the schools have always attempted to do in singling out the athlete, the artist, and the potential scientist. The propagandist's idea of card stacking by pulling an emotional bluster into the picture just doesn't belong in the discussion."

Let's not call it segregation. Let's just call it grouping, or not give it a special name at all, and then get on with the job. No one wants to isolate *any* children, or be undemocratic, or start an educational revolution. The objective is merely to correct an evil that is harming all of us.

Those who favor separate classes for the gifted reason as follows: With classes so large and with such a wide range of ability some children are bound to be overlooked. Johnny, the bright one, will be among the first to be ignored. He'll get along anyway, the teacher may think. So we will group the bright ones together and give them the education they need and deserve. And we will keep these groups flexible so children can be transferred into and out of special classes as the need arises.

Before you jump to a quick decision on this controversial question, at least skim over this list of favorable and unfavorable reasons for separate classes for gifted children. Here are the arguments as they are usually made; draw your own conclusions:

For:

1. In a class on his own mental level a child is stimulated and motivated to work closer to his capacity; the competition is there, the experiences may be more varied and suitable than in the regular class-



- room, the teacher is more likely to have time *for* him and the qualifications and desire to work *with* him, and the pace will more logically be swift enough. Plain talk and common sense tell us, say the proponents, that the standards are higher. Forcing everyone to get an education planned for the average is morally wrong.
2. He will have practice in being both a leader and follower, rather than perhaps always being a leader in a class where all the other youngsters lag behind him mentally. And we are not taking away the leaders in regular classrooms either; leadership and giftedness do not necessarily go together.
  3. He is getting more practice for the adulthood he faces, where he will continue to be able to choose friends on his own intellectual level. In spite of what some folks say, we do have a chance to choose our adult friends and occasionally the closeness of our working relationship with coworkers, and our tendency is to select those with whom we have something in common.
  4. He will be less conceited and smug than in a situation where he is the standout, the one "brain" in a class of average and below-average students. Envy really rears its head where brightness is constantly in evidence for the average child to see.
  5. If we let him stay with the others he will frustrate and frighten them as they aim toward his level, a level they just are not and never will be capable of reaching. If we play tennis or bridge, do we play with those whose skills are far above ours? Not on your life! Averageness or mediocrity seeks, and is satisfied with only its own level. No one has proved that the less capable students need the brighter ones around in order to work to their capacity. And no one is suggesting that the regular classroom will have a very limited range of ability. It will have only a few skimmed off, with a wide range among those remaining. The bright one tends to segregate himself anyway whether we like it or not; as parents know so well, friendship cannot be forced.
  6. More concentration can be given to abstract and creative ideas and to critical thinking materials; there can be less devotion to unnecessary drill in adapting to the special needs and abilities of a selected group.
  7. In special classes a bright child can see himself more realistically in relation to those on his level, a possibility which may not exist in the regular classroom. He also sees his limitations more clearly than if he stays with others below his level where his limitations may have a tendency to seem not to exist at all.



8. He will work harder and develop fewer superficial bluffing and lazy habits when others are on his ability level. There will be less tendency to slide along and expect rewards for his natural abilities rather than for accomplishments resulting from trying hard to get a job done.
9. He will be better adjusted socially because now he won't be the "odd ball," the one who is so different, therefore peculiar, therefore outside the realm of "us kids." He will be with those who more frequently think, do, and aspire as he does. Besides, he won't be isolated from the others; there are plenty of club, extracurricular, and playground activities when he will not be separated.
10. Nothing at all undemocratic about it, say many writers in the field. The nub of their thinking is that "so long as the selection is based upon ability and no one is excluded because of race, social, or economic status . . . there can be no basis to the charge that selected classes are undemocratic."<sup>4</sup> We segregate chronological age groups now, and also socioeconomic groups by neighborhoods. No one suggests *forcing* the rich and poor together in school.
11. The clincher of the pro-special class contingent is this: In studies made of matched groups of bright children, one in special classes and the other in regular classrooms, the former invariably excel academically and at least hold their own in personality traits. In other words, the separated ones show a higher gain in achievement, and not at the expense of social or personal adjustment for themselves or, presumably, for the other children in their class and in the regular classes.

AGAINST:

1. He will become arrogant and superior because he has been selected for a special class, and the one left behind will certainly feel the stigma. Anyone who tells you that children are not aware of which class is the "best" or "highest" just doesn't know how alert children are to such divisions, and how much feeling they have about them.
2. He will have little practice for living in a democracy where each person must get along with all other kinds of persons. Are we eager to create an aristocracy of intelligence, a kind of super-race based on mentality and on people who lose the common touch?
3. Where will the leadership in the regular classroom come from if these youngsters are filtered out? Who will set the pace to which others want to aspire, stimulate them to *their* capacities?

<sup>4</sup> D. A. Worcester, *The Education of Children of Above-Average Mentality*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1956, p. 47.

4. Other children will become jealous, and maybe even somewhat awed, suspicious, and resentful.
5. If we pull out the bright ones for special treatment, we will have too much of a tendency to press them, push them, prod them to depths and heights that make them into little adults and use up their childhood speedily.
6. In the regular classroom, leaders will develop spontaneously; in the special classroom the atmosphere is selective and unnatural, so that the leaders here lead only slim groups and not the broad base of the majority.
7. How can the gifted be selected anyway for this special treatment? Are the devices, tests, observational techniques good enough to say that this one goes on and that one stays back with the average and slow groups? And shouldn't we be concerned about the friendships already formed if we decide to pull youngsters away from the group of which they already feel a part?
8. We must not forget the small and poorer schools and districts which cannot set up special classes. In a time when money is so short for educational needs anyway, it is foolish to spend it on the few at the expense of the many who also need small classes and better teachers.
9. If the children in selected classes are on the same mental level, but vary in their actual ages, a lot of social maladjustments result. The very bright, large 6-year-old girl and the almost as bright, little 8-year-old boy really don't have much in common even though their IQ's are fairly close together.
10. There is no such thing as a "homogeneous" group, so why kid ourselves? Children differ from each other; they are not cut from the same molds, regardless of how many are used, and we may as well recognize that our classrooms will have a wide range in personality and other factors no matter how closely we try to limit the extremes in the area of mentality.
11. If we strain off the cream, who will want to teach the ones left? Most teachers will resent remaining with the rest, and their teaching plus the mirrored resentment of their students will show up in lesser achievement and increased school drop-outs among the average and below-average students.

So the discussion goes, with exactly opposite points of view expressed. There are plenty of variations on these themes too, and the arguments are just as difficult to resolve as the perennial dispute of demand versus regular feeding of babies. The evidence is just

not clear enough to point toward an unchangeable answer for all time and for all children. So it becomes necessary that the decisions be based on *this* school, *these* teachers and administrators, and *these* children and parents.

All kinds of questions crop up: How do the teachers and administrators feel about separate classes? How many gifted children are there; do we have enough to set them up? What will separate classes cost in this school or school system; can we afford them? (And—can we afford *not* to have them?) What do the parents think about them? Will an orientation meeting or series of meetings be worth the trouble for both teachers and parents? What are the mechanics involved, and which of the many selective factors should be used if we go ahead with special classes (mental age, chronological age, achievement, social and emotional maturity, talents, interests)? Should we experiment with them, use them in combination with other methods, or choose another way of helping our gifted children? Has there been enough research, has the method been adequately tested by others, to indicate that it is worth our while to try it out on our children?

Let's move into the realm of places and people for more information on separate classes for the gifted, places that have tried them and people considered to be authorities on the subject.

*Cleveland.* This city's "Major Work Program" exists in selected elementary, junior high, and senior high schools for children with IQ's of 125 and above. While the classes are separate, the children are not isolated from other school activities such as gym, clubs, chorus, orchestra, and playground. Class aims are to extend the range of knowledge and skills, and to develop alertness, initiative, creative power, critical thinking, working and planning independently, ability to share tasks, and leadership. No one could argue with those objectives any more than they can with the belief in Country and Mother!

Class procedures differ in degree in such areas as pupils' solution of disciplinary problems, pupils' evaluation of their own talks and group reports, French in early grades, independent study and re-

search, pupil-teacher planning. The subject matter covered differs from regular classrooms only in the richness and intensity of the offerings, with drill when needed and larger units of work because of the longer attention spans of the children involved. Teachers for the program *want* to be a part of it, and are selected carefully as far as academic and personality qualifications are concerned. If they are able to adjust to flexible and fluctuating needs and methods they stand a chance of making good.

The many years Cleveland has had these classes (since 1920) demonstrate that for *that* city they meet a need. And the follow-up of the students indicates that as youngsters their achievement was at least up to grade level with the dividend of having had an enriched environment for learning, and as adults their attainments and adjustments are above those of comparable persons without similar school opportunities.

How the children themselves felt about these special classes when questioned later on is significant. Almost half approved of them enthusiastically, and 74 percent were in favor of them from a lukewarm to an overwhelming degree. They especially liked the chances to express individuality, freedom from regimentation, curricular differences, stimulation, and classmates. High on their list of least liked factors were two you would expect to find—the attitudes of other children and teachers, and the limited social contacts with other pupils. But “did they help you make a good later adjustment?” “Sure!” said two out of three.

*Other Localities.* *St. Louis* uses an arbitrary dividing IQ of 130, and in its special classes enriches the program mainly with foreign language and science activities. In both achievement *and* social adjustment the youngsters are surpassing expectations, encouraging this system to continue its experimental work. *New York City* began its special opportunity classes in 1922; *Baltimore* aims its fire on special classes at the junior high level; and *Allentown, Pennsylvania* set up special classes in one school to which children come from all over the city.

*Leta S. Hollingworth.* Although New York City was her proving



ground and extremely high IQ's (above 180) demanded much of her time, her conclusions had implications for gifted children across the country and down to the 125 or 130 IQ level. Her many conclusions based on a solid foundation in research included these: (1) achievement of gifted children in special and regular classes didn't differ much, but the entire scholastic experience of the former groups was enriched and—what is as important—the special classes did not produce smugness, conceit, or personality or social handicaps; (2) time needed for drill in the 3 R's for gifted children in special classes could be reduced considerably from what they would receive in most regular classrooms; (3) gifted children may deliberately hide their lights in regular groups, but begin to shine and expand in special classes where their vocabularies, ideas, humor, and games can come out naturally and freely.

Henry H. Goddard. His 1928 book, *School Training of Gifted Children*, can still cause mental sparks to fly among folks interested in this subject. His work was mostly in Cleveland, and his conclusions are what you would imagine—he liked special classes! In a clever way he raises the objections to them (conceit, isolating leaders, undemocratic, and the others) and then with precision pops each one off its pins. He asks this interesting question: Is a child more likely to become conceited in a class of 20 as bright as he is, or in a regular class where he is by far the brightest? He states his case very simply by saying there is a "fundamental reason why these children should be put in classes by themselves. They are different from other children." The simplicity of his approach is apparent here too: "After all, the principle involved is not new. We have only changed the basis of grouping. Heretofore we have grouped children for school purposes on the basis of chronological age. It is now proposed to group them on the basis of mental age. We picked out the defectives because they were most troublesome. Some schools are now picking out the gifted because they are most useful." He maintained that many of the objections raised against special classes for gifted were once raised against special classes for feeble-minded.



Mental age and IQ were not his only bases for selecting children for special classes. He also included stability, home conditions, health, happiness, and conduct. Other suggestions he made to smaller schools and districts were these: Go down to an IQ of 110 if necessary to get enough children for one grade; combine high IQ children from a few different grades; combine children from various schools.

In addition to the experts and the children (as in Cleveland), there are at least two other groups with definite ideas on the subject—teachers and parents. Generally the teachers who have taught gifted children in special classes believe in their value, and those who have not are frequently skeptical. Isn't that what you would expect to find? Maybe the objectors feel threatened by a bright little one left behind, or resent the teacher selected for the gifted group. In any case, they find fault with many things: the fundamentals are neglected; the chosen children are conceited and show off; parents pull strings to get youngsters in; the children would have made more progress in regular classes. All that the special teachers can point to is children who more than hold their own in achievement and who are adjusting and satisfied. For many school systems, that's enough.

And what about the parents' ideas on special classes? It depends on *whose* parents we're talking about. Parents of gifted children usually approve; parents of the others often do not. It takes a lot of administrative tact and wisdom to get common acceptance and understanding, and to help avoid jealousy and suspicion.

A special problem is the parents of children just below the line, whatever that line may be. Because we love our own children so much, we find ourselves pushing since we just can't stand having ours left behind. We do it in regard to school entry, and here is another situation where we are at the shoving end. Another way in which we pressure is just as questionable; if the child has been accepted into a special class, our whole outlook toward him may change. "Isn't he smarter? Isn't he more capable? Shouldn't we

expect more . . . and more . . . and more?" Maybe it is hard for us to accept, but even gifted children's capacities are limited, and we are not helping by making them get in there and charge ahead as on a football field. Relax and enjoy the little fellow!

### ACCELERATION

When most of us were in elementary school "skipping" was used as both a promise and a threat. "If you continue to do well, you'll move up to the next grade in the middle of the year" or "if you don't keep up, you'll move back again." Based on a negative kind of reward and punishment, and conjuring up ideas of a tiny child among those bigger and brawnier, the procedure fell into disrepute. There was nothing particularly wrong about the whole idea if it were used carefully, except that we had peculiar, and usually unwarranted thoughts about what it meant.

"Skipping" may mean moving on without accomplishing the skills and goals of a given level; acceleration has a healthier connotation, for here the onward movement leaves no gaps behind. The basic ingredients of the course of study—whether they are fractions, percentage, square root, geography around the earth, or science experiments—are all covered, but faster, because this is a bright youngster who doesn't need as much time or drill as the others.

Feelings run high about this method of helping the gifted, with plenty of support and opposition. The points of view go something like this:

#### FOR:

1. It is the easiest and most economical way of providing for individual differences based on mentality. The school's basic curriculum doesn't have to be changed, and it does not disrupt classes or classrooms, so there is no cost to the school system.
2. Acceleration helps provide the motivation which will keep a gifted child on his toes instead of encouraging slovenly and lazy habits by insisting that he slow down to the average. By leading him into studies that challenge we will relieve his boredom and his frustrations,

both of which inevitably result to a great degree from the large classes of today. We may be able to reduce social and emotional maladjustments too.

3. Our gifted children are usually capable of going into professional careers which demand so many years of education that they may be 30 years old or more before they can begin their actual work. Why not shorten that time at the most easily consolidated part? We need their skills as fast as we can get them, as our studies of automation and manpower shortages indicate; and if we don't let these youngsters race along closer to their capacities we may never get them at all. It is from the ranks of the bored bright ones that thousands of our school drop-outs come each year.
4. Promotion should not be based on sheer time spent on a subject. What is so magic about that? No correlation has been found between the time devoted to a subject and the knowledge gained; it all depends on *who* is devoting the time. Nothing is by-passed or skipped in this plan; much of the work is merely accomplished more quickly, letting the child progress at the speed for which he was made—so why hold him back? And anyway, isn't it much *more* dangerous to do nothing at all than it is to accelerate? Our error is so often in the direction of just plain lethargy, fear of change and even activity.

#### AGAINST:

1. It is very important to keep the child with those of his size and social and emotional level. Moving him up to his mental level may not take these other factors into consideration, and may therefore increase maladjustments.
2. As long as teachers follow a course of study and have crowded classes, the child who is accelerated is bound to skip some vital segments of his schooling, and will be forced to follow the curriculum of average older children.
3. Mental age by itself is a questionable factor to use for grade placement. Just because two youngsters have the same mental age does not mean they will learn, respond, or be interested in the same way; their chronological age difference may get in the way.
4. No one is accelerated to the same extent in all subjects. Inequalities will result from grade jumping which includes a full grade and therefore all subjects of the curriculum.

One of the difficulties in making any sense out of these differences of opinion is the fact that they *are* opinions and not based on

creditable research. This problem is rather standard in the area of school methods for gifted children—not enough proof to support either side of the picture.

Many questions have to be answered before a particular school decides to adopt this method which was one of the earliest used: How are we to choose which children are to be accelerated? When is the best time to let a youngster move ahead—what grade, age, and time of the year? How can parents be brought into the plan? How can the activities in the “leaving” and “arriving” rooms be coördinated so the child isn’t left at loose ends? What can we do to be sure that in the new room the youngster gets what he needs, and not what the average older child is exposed to there? Are we capable of doing it in our school on the kind of individual basis it demands, taking into consideration many phases of maturity, in addition to just the mental, so that no social misfits result?

What is right for one child may not work at all for another. Donald may be bright, large, well-adjusted socially, well-coördinated physically; he might easily be ready to move on a year or two, and occupy a secure niche in the higher classroom. Ronald may have only a high mentality pushing him on, and both physically and socially he might be very much out of place among the older children. These and many other factors are what parents and teachers must consider when acceleration is discussed for a particular child. One thing is certainly true: Ability to do the work of the next grade is never enough by itself to move a child up to that level. The IQ gives only part of the story.

Few people advocate acceleration alone, without enrichment or other ways of working with the gifted. As a sole solution it is a thin answer to a very complicated problem. And those who suggest it insist on limited use, perhaps a year or two at most for even very bright children.

In Dr. Terman’s long-range study of gifted children he concluded that acceleration worked well for that particular group; those who were moved ahead did better academically in high school, with a higher proportion graduating from college, more graduated with



honors, and more going on to graduate work. He found no significant differences in social adjustments, and in adulthood they were more often occupationally successful than were nonaccelerated gifted students.

With the most creative work done in nearly all areas of science, music, art, and other fields between ages 25 and 35, he pointed out the need for not delaying this productivity too long because of strung-out academic requirements. Let them enter college at 16 or 17, he insisted.

Acceleration takes many forms other than grade-skipping, accompanied or not by a complete fill-in of all materials and skills included in the grade passed over. To name a few:

1. Early admission to first grade.
2. College work taken during the high school years.
3. Early admission to college.
4. Fewer school vacations, permitting speedier completion of school work.

The last named is an obvious administrative scheme, and 2 and 3 will be considered later. The first has some intriguing possibilities.

If we take a dozen 6-year-olds they will vary greatly in size, weight, interests, and abilities. However, currently only their birth dates are considered in connection with school entry, and few people seem to care much about the many other ways in which they differ. Instead of having an arbitrary cut-off date for entry to kindergarten or first grade, wouldn't it make better sense, according to those who support this idea, to give some consideration to these other differences? Wouldn't teachers prefer and children learn more from classes that were more similar in their abilities (provided we take their physical and social adjustment into account)?

The plan could work like this:

1. Continue to have a cut-off date of October 1, December 1, February 1, or whatever it may be at present. Admit children into first grade if they were 6 years old before that date.



2. Test, observe, and evaluate children whose birth dates come within a certain period *after* the cut-off: one month, two months, or whatever period seems appropriate.
3. Siphon off the top layer of that second group and admit them also.

This method removes part of the mechanical inflexibility of a single deciding date for admission, and, in addition, provides for the youngsters who are more ready than others to go on. It calls for an early testing program, and many educators and parents would profit from having that information for guidance purposes before too many years have passed, if it is reliably administered and interpreted. Of course, testing is only part of the evaluation process which would have to include all of the more acceptable child study methods, especially the following:

1. Child interview.
2. Parent interview.
3. Reading readiness test.
4. Mental test.
5. Observation in various situations.
6. Teacher and administrator comments if child has previously been in nursery school and/or kindergarten.

Acceleration of this kind is done individually, with extreme care and the full understanding of parents. It doesn't run the risk of shortening the elementary school program, merely getting it started earlier for those who are qualified to profit. And it calls for a follow-up to see how well it continues to work for the youngsters selected.

But have you ever thought which is the *best* of all situations for acceleration, the kind of setup in which it works most satisfactorily? The framework now exists in few places in this country, for the ideal is the old one-room school! There, without grade barriers and artificial signposts, the teacher was completely free to move a child up in one or every subject as his ability to absorb the contents became apparent to her. The child could be "all" under those

circumstances, a situation we have unfortunately had to lose in a mass education system that is trying to do the best it can in the midst of a deluge.

### ENRICHMENT

If he's skinny, give him cream. If he is weak, give him a protein extract. If he is tired, rest him up. Meet the deficiency, whatever it is, by pumping into him the product that he needs. So goes the reasoning, and it applies in education too. Enrich the skimmed diet by a thickening process that will occupy and attract, interest and stimulate.

Enrichment of the academic program of the gifted is by all odds the current favorite, and while its heart is in the right place, it remains unproven and unsatisfying. And it is often misunderstood.

In schools we most frequently relate enrichment to (1) keeping a child with his age group in a regular class and (2) broadening the program or content covered by him. However, enrichment can certainly be a part of separate classes and many of the other organizational methods, such as special courses and use of special facilities (laboratories, shops, and others).

Since the regular classroom setting is the one usually associated with enrichment, let's take a peephole look and talk about what we see. Here are some of the sights we observe:

The teacher who really believes that children differ from each other, and who adapts the program to their abilities and needs on an individual and small group basis. She may never use the word "enrich" but she does it just the same.

The teacher who gives all the children one assignment and *that* one gets two because he's so smart. He'll be smart, all right, and slow down to the point where she'll shake her head and wonder whatever happened to his brightness, not realizing that it wasn't *what* but *who* happened to him. This so-called enrichment Goddard referred to in this way: "A curriculum that is not fitted to the type of mind possessed by the

gifted child, we attempted to adjust to his needs by giving him twice as much of it!"<sup>5</sup>

The workbooks, seat work, and other varieties of busy-work that are used to "kill time." Used meaningfully they can serve an excellent educational need, but as time-users they are futile replacements for activities that could be exciting and invigorating.

The overworked teacher prodding slow children up to an average they may not be able to reach—and looking out the window through glazed eyes is a child who no longer cares. A clear desk, an empty sheet of paper, and immobilized thoughts represent the product of the classroom where the bright are sacrificed for the dull.

The teacher who feels insecure or pushed by bright children, and who repays in terms of impatience. John J. Wright, Bishop of Worcester, Massachusetts said not long ago, "Perhaps it is necessary at the moment . . . to develop a special patience with the bright and the sometimes irritatingly brilliant—a patience comparable to that which we have always virtuously tried to have toward the dull."

Where does enrichment end and busy-work begin? Are teachers in regular classrooms capable of motivating *all* their children to capacity? Which activities are challenging for a particular child? When should we admit we have failed in our objectives of providing an enriched program? Are bright and slower children stimulated or held back by the presence of the others? How can community facilities be utilized to their maximum? These are the questions. How they are answered will determine whether this method is just so much talk or whether it actually holds promise for today's gifted children.

Ask some teachers, and they will tell you in no uncertain terms: "I can't do it, and the reasons are obvious: too many children, too few materials, too many little jobs and records piled on me to handle. Cut my student load and watch the enrichment activities flood in. Until then, just get out of my way as I try my best to meet the needs of the majority."

Others will say: "It doesn't matter what you call it. I've been

<sup>5</sup> Henry H. Goddard, *School Training of Gifted Children*, Yonkers, New York, World Book Company, 1928, p. 3.

doing it for years! Give it any name you want, but it still means the best teaching I can do adapted to this child, and that one, and the quiet one over there, based on what they're capable of and what problems they have here and at home. And let's not belittle it because some teachers don't know how; it's *still* the best method."

Enrichment cannot be separated from the skill of a teacher. The teacher who barely gets through the day as far as his own stamina is concerned and who forgot long ago that these are isolated as well as interrelated, different as well as similar little people in front of him obviously will not enrich the children's education. His own life is probably without brightness too, so of course we can't expect any better of him on the job. "Too low they build who build beneath the stars" represents the stodgy, frozen outlooks that do not encourage the brightness of new ideas, the constant expansion of young minds, the searching of children who have not yet had the world of the future close in on them.

Thousands of courses of study, teachers' guides issued from reputable publishing firms, and ideas of creative teachers put the finger on the teacher who mourns over the poor child with nothing to do while he works with the others. Nothing to do? How can that be when we have the vibrant, ever-expanding curiosity of a child on one side and the whole world full of changing patterns of persons, places, and things on the other?

Frequently the worst thing that happens to a bright child is the teacher without initiative and creativity. The child may be far better off if he is let alone than be subjected to the dull, dreary environment of an adult who no longer looks toward a new tomorrow.

Childhood's world always has new horizons, and our task is, first of all, to guide and shape them, and then, secondly, get out of the way! We can help a great deal by having available the equipment and materials they need but may not express a need for if they don't happen to know about them: encyclopedia, tape recorder, record player, typewriter, terrarium, flannel-boards, games



(chess and anagrams, for example), tools (hammers, saws, screw drivers, chisels), and a broad expanse of reading materials in various subjects and on different ability levels.

Enrichment at its richest must be based on real understanding and not just the barren accumulation of facts. It must be willing to devote to drill only the time that is absolutely necessary, and realize that bright children get the idea fast and are ready to move on. "All right, I heard that *once*—now, where do we go from here?" is the expected comment, and the teacher ready to step along is primed to move fast and out of the way.

Don't let anyone tell you that *no* drill is necessary, however. Learning frequently demands repetition, but we ought not run practice into the ground with these children who catch on quickly. A little alert checking now and then can indicate to the discerning teacher whether they really did get the idea. These students will be the first to know when they fall short and need more help on fundamentals.

Some people mistakenly believe that within the gifted child himself lies enough power to carry him along to his own goals and capacity. Perhaps a rare youngster does have that ability, but we cannot depend on it. The interest and judgment of a good teacher are essential parts of an educational program which aids a child toward his maximal growth. The jigsaw of a satisfying program for the gifted can no more leave out the plans of a good teacher than it can the dreams of parents tied in with the turned-up nose, freckles, and cowlick of their little boy. No educators could ever support the idea of incidental, slipshod learning; it takes systematic planning, especially important with these children.

Nor is there a need for the teacher to feel possessive about the many activities into which the creativity of the gifted will lead. It would not be smart to close the door on all the help available both within the school and outside. The librarian, for example, has resource materials at her finger tips. The community has concerned parents who are waiting to be asked and hope to feel wanted, as well as many specialists from museums, universities, and industry.



Hundreds of sources of free and inexpensive materials allocate huge parts of their budgets to satisfy the public who writes for them. (Here is an idea many teachers wear out, however; it must be used with discrimination and guidance, or else these sources will just dry up and disappear. There is no room for an avalanche of poorly directed letters written merely to land some free products.)

One of the most difficult—and most satisfying—ways of working with gifted children in an enriched regular classroom is through the unit method. Coöperatively planned projects and problems which have niches in them for children of varying abilities and interests will frequently include some knotty questions to pique the attention of the gifted. The many activities will include trips, research, bulletin boards, experiments, and demonstrations, numerous activities which demand creative thinking and vibrant imaginations. Here the gifted child can shine, for with the guidance of a wise teacher the sky becomes the limit in a true unit experience. Inhibitions make way for work based on what there is frequently an amazing compulsion to accomplish.

One recent tendency is to broaden the program to include subjects not formerly taught. A good example is foreign language teaching on the elementary level. The advantages are apparent: Easy for young children to learn; valuable for children in areas where other languages are spoken (e.g., along the Mexican border and in foreign sections of large cities); related to cultural understandings. However, unless this teaching does more than fill a time gap it ought to be forgotten. Most regular elementary school teachers cannot handle this task, and if they can't, an additional expense is involved.

A recent survey lists more than 400 communities and 300,000 students in the elementary school foreign language program across the country. Radio and television have stepped into this area of the enrichment picture, with Spanish leading the parade and French, German, Italian and others on the list. Among the matters which a school system would have to consider are how the program

will be financed, which youngsters will participate, and how it will be articulated with other parts of the curriculum.

Many localities have made deliberate efforts to develop enrichment programs rather than depend on the initiative of teachers and be disappointed by the lethargy of those who won't use it. Long Beach, Pittsburgh, San Diego County, and Passaic exemplify these efforts.

*Long Beach, California.* In its very-superior-pupil program the major emphasis is on enrichment, although a limited amount of acceleration is used. In addition, gifted children are brought together, with parents' consent, so that as few as possible are isolated in mixed classes in small schools. While they enrich as much as they can, based on continuing attention to and exchange of specific teacher ideas, the Long Beach schools recognize key problems such as "How do we do it?" "Can't we get rid of the generalities and get down to concrete, specific, detailed business?" and "Are we able to eliminate teacher and parent emotional undertones and reactions?"

*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.* Directly through the subject matter areas the emphasis is put on enrichment, with a constant search underway for techniques and materials to make science, social studies, language arts, arithmetic, and all the rest mean more, remain with the students longer, and have a deeper and broader spread for the gifted.

*San Diego County, California.* That same subject matter emphasis is the center of this county program where both acceleration and segregation are rejected. In the city of San Diego a number of ideas related to enrichment have been used: Teacher consultants to aid regular teachers; parent study groups (which were later abandoned because of size); detailed counseling and guidance programs.

*Passaic, New Jersey.* Right through the grades, with enrichment gimmicks like science newspapers, scripts for musical satires, reviewing boards to recommend book purchases, and other special projects, Passaic has put into practice its belief that enriched pro-

grams must begin in the early primary grades and continue uninterrupted.

Four summarizing sections follow to bring together some of the current thinking on the subject of enrichment:

1. General enrichment ideas.
2. Specific enrichment ideas.
3. Major factors in favor of enrichment.
4. Major factors against enrichment.

The first two are lists of highlights, many of which must be considered if a teacher or school wants to give serious thought to this way of teaching the gifted. A key adjunct is the need for adapting these two "idea" lists to the academic level involved. Another is to realize that all of the items on those two lists are not necessarily appropriate for any individual child or group of children. While emphasis in these suggestions is on the elementary level, implications and ideas are plentifully sprinkled through for the secondary school which will receive more attention in the next chapter.

#### GENERAL ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Grouping within the classroom on the basis of ability.
2. Special assignments and projects, individual and group.
3. Unit responsibilities based on interests and abilities, done on both an individual and a committee basis.
4. Free and independent reading; access to great variety of reading materials.
5. Creative writing and thinking; other creative activities, like art and music.
6. Written and oral reports; demonstrations of their special activities.
7. Learning of a foreign language.
8. Use of research techniques in digging into a problem; reports on research done.
9. Emphasis on the abstract—probing for "reasons why," the reasons *behind* materials covered by the class, especially in the fields of science, history, and arithmetic, the search for principles once the drill essentials are accomplished.
10. Probing *behind* events of the day and the acts which led up to them.

11. Vocabulary expansion and word derivation.
12. Time for planning, thinking through, and evaluating; use of the often-mentioned pupil-teacher planning idea.
13. Creative leadership, as distinguished from order-giving; opportunities for both leadership and follower roles.
14. Teacher approach based on "how" and "why."
15. Program adaptation to talents of gifted children.
16. Participation in community services, develop civic responsibility.
17. Emphasis on mechanical and physical skills, social relationships, aesthetic awareness and other areas to give balance to the childhood of the gifted.
18. Attitude that education is not limited to the classroom but includes community resources, excursions, trips, and observations.
19. Physical room arrangement to provide for varied activities, interests, and units; places for animals and materials; flexibility; bulletin boards.
20. Extracurricular activities to broaden the program.

#### SPECIFIC ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Observations and interviews in the community—community workers, industry, library, art galleries, and many others.
2. Planning field trips.
3. Problems related to home and current needs, such as budgeting, getting along with others, and hobbies.
4. Art and music festivals and exhibitions.
5. Construction activities, arts and crafts, ceramics, clay, modelling.
6. Management of room library.
7. Helping other children.
8. Planning assemblies, panel discussions.
9. Television and radio scripts, plays, songs, puppet shows—writing, directing, presenting.
10. Location of source materials for class use.
11. Preview and introduction of audio-visual aids.
12. Science fairs and talent hunts.
13. Inventions, maps, weather and other charts, models.
14. Class and school newspaper.
15. Exhibits and displays, book fairs, hobby shows, murals, circus.
16. Collections based on unusual specimens of leaves, rocks, seeds, and other objects.
17. Leadership of school drives.
18. Student council or other room or school committees.

19. Reading poetry and writing original poems.
20. Arithmetic riddles.
21. Analysis and reasoning used in news and feature stories in newspapers.
22. Telling stories and reading to children in lower grades.
23. Making slides, film strips, and other audio-visual aids.
24. Entering contests which require particular talents.
25. Special interest clubs and workshops based on hobbies and talents, as part of the school schedule or on an extracurricular basis.
26. Companies, corporations, and other activities that simulate the outside world and the work of their parents; insurance companies, labor unions, stores, others.
27. "Who's Who" of characters from fiction, science, and history.
28. Demonstration of folk games; instruction in folk dances.
29. Bulletin board posters for various weeks celebrated during the year—Book Week, Education Week, Boy Scout Week, Girl Scout Week, and dozens of others.
30. Regularly kept log of class activities.

For:

1. We should keep our gifted children in classes with others because that is the nature of their later environment. We ought to prepare them early to live with others. In a regular classroom they can work together for the benefit of all, and develop their natural abilities to lead and follow.
2. Enrichment in regular classrooms can be used in schools of all sizes and in every kind of community, for it is based on the program for the entire group, and then extended in both breadth and depth. Recent refinements in child study techniques are helpful in setting it up.
3. This is the least expensive and most realistic method of all, for no special administrative arrangements have to be made. And the greater variety of activities plus a recognition of special needs and interests cannot help but benefit *all* the children.
4. Just as bright children gain from being with the slower ones, so do the latter profit and feel stimulated to do better work than they would if only with others on their own ability level.
5. Flexibility can aid the teacher in meeting the needs of all. Since there is no such thing as a completely homogeneous classroom, let us keep our children with varied abilities together, adapt the program to their variations, and plan so that each child benefits in an individual manner.



AGAINST:

1. The slower child is not stimulated by the bright child, but he is actually disturbed and frustrated.
2. The gifted youngster receives no stimulus when his school environment consists exclusively of those who cannot share his ideas, conversation, and ambitions; for him it may become a barren world.
3. If one is brighter than the others he develops some unwanted characteristics—smugness and laziness are two of them. He certainly will not be encouraged to do his best.
4. Neglect is the “reward” for giftedness in the regular classroom, for other children get more help with their work. And boredom is the result. Forcing an average education on all penalizes youngsters at both ends of the scale while it may benefit only those in the middle. (The only way in which enrichment can work is to have classes small enough, materials plentiful enough, and teachers prepared to respect and teach children as individuals.)
5. Fifth grade work for the fourth grader, twice as many questions or problems, or extra homework is what some teachers (falsely) call “enrichment.”
6. Even if the teacher knows and wants to practice all the best enrichment ideas, what happens if the administrator is rigid and demands strict conformity with a narrowly defined course of study? (And, of course, there are administrators who will put this kind of blame right back on an uncompromising, uncreative, unbendable teacher.)

A parting shot on the subject of enrichment points up the need for breadth and balance without exploitation. Workbooks, yes—if they aren't just to fill time. Teaching other children, of course—but not a heavy load of it. Excess is a danger here as it is throughout other educational programs, and as it also is in business, industry, family life, and everywhere else.

An older statement on enrichment gives a capsule treatment in conclusion:

Who can say what will be the ultimate value of all this extra work carried on for 10 or 12 years of the elementary and high school course? It is easy to see the mass of information that is being acquired; but we must not let that blind us to the vastly more important and valuable acquisition of habits of *thinking*, of studying, of investigating, of judging, of seeing both sides of a question, of stating problems as well as solving

them; and finally, the development of habits of self-control and of carrying responsibility. These are the real enrichments.<sup>6</sup>

### PARTIAL SEGREGATION

Keep them in their regular classrooms for enrichment programs there, *and* send them to segregated classes for enrichment programs on that basis. Some communities have worked out what is for them the ideal solution, combining the best of two of the major approaches to the problem. Having gifted children in separate classes for part of each day or week requires the following ingredients.

1. Administrators and teachers must be flexible enough to adapt their schedules to the fluctuating needs of growing children.
2. Teachers must be available with specialized interests and skills who are willing to guide the selected students in areas like dramatics, art, music, creative writing, or the academic fields like science or social studies.
3. If the teachers are not specialized enough in their abilities, it becomes necessary to seek such supplementary services on a part-time basis from skilled persons in the community.
4. Laboratories and work rooms can be used profitably by the brighter students, where they frequently can involve themselves in activities either with or without the help of an instructor.

One newspaper editor felt strongly enough on this subject to editorialize on it:

We believe there is a way in which the problem of the gifted child could be approached successfully by the smallest school community: not by any big expenditure, not by any vast addition to the facilities of the school, but simply by the addition of one member to the school faculty.

What we have in mind is a gifted teacher for the gifted student.

Such a teacher would have to have a broad general background in literature, the arts and the sciences; at least two foreign languages (one

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

ancient, one modern); and, in general, all the mental furniture of a cultivated human.

He would teach no regular classes; or if he taught a class regularly, it would be an irregular class . . . for example, he might teach Spanish or Latin or music appreciation to a group of children of varying ages. Certainly he would not be allowed to offer more than one or at most two courses in any semester, and his subjects should change often. But most of his time would be used in tutoring individuals, and groups of two or three, in subjects in which their reach exceeds the materials available. He might guide a child's reading (and incidentally help him get books not available in the usual school library): this he could and should do for every gifted child. He might open for another the vast world of art. He might give a mathematically inclined child trigonometry, and the beginnings of calculus. He would be a flexible resource, with enough range to be able to help almost any child develop his own talents.

Workable?

We think so.<sup>7</sup>

The following three communities are among those experimenting with the partially segregated idea.

*University City, Missouri.* Students meet in small groups of 8 or 10 with "enrichment teachers" for a few hours each week during school time to study in areas such as language arts, social studies, science, and current events. They explore topics not usually included in the regular curriculum, with the time used for reading, discussion, written and oral reports, lectures by authorities, experiments, trips, and construction of models, charts, graphs, and maps. Study habits and attitudes are considered even more important than the activities themselves. The success of the program seems evident from these results: (1) a higher number of honor roll listings from the selected group than from a matched control group; (2) eagerness of the children to participate; (3) whole family participation in the experience; (4) acceptance of responsibility and demonstrations of self-confidence on the part of the children involved.

*Colfax School, Pittsburgh.* A workshop idea is set up for superior children in which the "enrichment teacher" pursues academic sub-

<sup>7</sup> *Chronicle*, Colfax, Louisiana, April 6, 1956.

jects with them. A problem-research approach is used in the workshops which occupy half the day, and the rest of the time is spent with the regular chronological age groups. The three essential experiences provided by the workshops are (1) group activities with social and mental peers, (2) individual activities through projects, and (3) drill in skill areas.

*Castro Valley, California.* In addition to a collection of enrichment materials in the regular classroom which encourages the child to perform independently, special workshop sessions are arranged two hours a week for children with IQ's of 120 and above. Major ingredients stressed in addition to originality and sound study habits are such topics as world affairs, literature, vocational information, science, hobbies, music, and art.

In these three localities, as well as in others, partial segregation is used for specific tasks which cannot be met in the regular classroom. Special groupings are set up, for after all these children are not consistently high in *all* areas of learning. Flexibility permits the school to desegregate for fields where they are not leading the way.

Simple in purpose—complex in practice—maybe that's why relatively few schools try it.

We can look for much continued research on a carefully controlled basis in this area. An example is the recent dissertation conducted by Richard H. Hinze at Stanford University; he attempted to measure the achievement, especially in science, of "fast learners" in a partially segregated program and others in regular classrooms.

### SPECIAL SCHOOLS

The expense gets in the way of organizing special schools for gifted children. So does the "undemocratic" accusation. Other objections to segregation are raised in this connection, objections to taking away the bright ones and to creating an unnatural environment for both those leaving and those remaining. These objections

carry little weight for persons who support the limited number of private schools which select their students on the basis of both money and ability. Because of the former factor they are sometimes able to provide an academic environment where the standards are enviably high. A number of public secondary schools have also been set up on a selective basis, but their number remains quite small.

One of the best known elementary schools for intellectually gifted children is the Hunter College Elementary School organized in 1941. Classroom teachers; special teachers in art, foreign language, music, health education, shop, and audio-visual enrichment; a large contingent of student teachers; and close coöperation with other departments of the college form the basis for the program, which aims to give children an education right up to the maximum of their considerable abilities. The advantages sought and often attained are to enrich their school experiences, provide opportunities for plenty of interaction with their peers, and make way for major needs.

Teachers of the first class at Hunter College Elementary School in recalling those students particularly remembered how modest they had been, how they recognized each other's talents but seldom compared themselves with their peers, and how they needed their egos built up, not much different from most children—or adults! It wasn't only their mental and social distinctions which were recalled by these teachers; the usual characteristics of gifted children in groups were well remembered—larger, stronger, better-looking, sense of humor, enthusiastic, considerate. The youngsters who had moved on to heterogeneous groups during seventh and eighth grades frequently felt they were wasting their time, an understandable attitude when one remembers that they came from an educational environment where individual needs and abilities were known and satisfied.

On the elementary school level especially, there is little evidence of a trend toward special schools for the gifted. But it is



one concrete idea in the hopper, and an intriguing thought that may attract some localities which feel it is the solution for *them*, no matter what others think or do.

### READING AND THE GIFTED CHILD

In each of the five educational methods of organizing the gifted outlined above, reading occupies an important place. Thank goodness, we can discuss the subject without getting mired in the perennial argument of phonics versus other methods of teaching reading, an argument that has made a lot of money for some people but which was silly from the start. For most gifted children we don't have to worry about serious reading deficiencies.

Gifted children usually *can* read—fast and comprehensively. They learn early, the method frequently doesn't make any difference, and the reading interests run high. But there is a problem anyway. Just because they read well is not good enough, for "well" may be far below the capacity attainable. So the parent's and teacher's job becomes one of encouraging the child to read close to that ability level, using the "come-on" of materials that tantalize and methods that stimulate independence in choosing books and other items.

A program that is truly enriched in the broadest sense of that word cannot help but bring to the child a wealth of reading materials which he is qualified to absorb. It will have many clear-cut objectives, including those of helping him—

1. Become sensitive to subtleties of meaning beyond those acquired by other youngsters. Semantic interpretations begin to enter his understanding at a very early age, paving the way for critical reading.
2. Realize that reading is not everything, but that since it is an important segment of the all-round development of a child, it can be related to many of his other work and play activities, including art, music, writing, story-telling, and dramatics.
3. Become acquainted with a wide variety of printed materials, including textbooks, supplementary textbooks, reference materials, and reading just for the fun of it.

4. Acquire study habits and techniques such as knowing the reason for a particular reading assignment, how to find information needed, how to evaluate the usefulness of information obtained, and how to adjust one's reading speed to the material.
5. Understand that we as adults are pleased about this ability to read, so that he does not get the mistaken notion that there is something to hide or be embarrassed about in connection with this pastime which is so enjoyable to him. Of course, other activities and sports are important, but must everyone enjoy them and participate in them to the same extent?
6. Find the materials that are related to his interests and abilities and that will encourage him on to other interests and higher ability levels.

In his reading, as well as in many other parts of his development, we have to recognize the similarities and differences between the gifted child and others. He will probably like comics too, but he will start sooner and give them up earlier. He will read whatever are the accepted adventure stories of the day, but perhaps at a younger age and for a shorter time. There are also items on the other side of the ledger. Before he is 10 or 11, he'll be fascinated by encyclopedias, atlases, and maybe science books and science fiction. He'll start reading adult fiction, biographies, magazines, and news stories long before we expect him to. Before he entered school, maybe even before his fifth birthday, he knew the difference between this word and that one, to the point that breakfast cereal boxes and television commercials became his first reading lessons—self-imposed!

His kindergarten and first grade teachers face a special problem, because according to most of their courses of study he's not *supposed* to read yet. So their task becomes one of setting up groups, with a small one to include him. It is also necessary that they have groups other than this one based on reading ability so that he is not always the outcast. The encouragement, approval, and guidance he receives at the start of his schooling may be the most important help and recognition given to him all the way through.

Next to his parents and teacher, the school and neighborhood librarians are frequently the most helpful persons in connection

with reading. Library clubs, library skills (card catalogs, use of reference and research sources, acquaintance with picture files and other audio-visual materials), supplementary materials for his teachers, and help in setting up personal reading lists and home libraries are just a few things with which they can help.

Dr. Ruth Strang, whose interests in reading and gifted children coincide at this point, reports that these youngsters have some definite views on the subject:

We want books, time, and a place to read.

We want to share with others what we have learned from reading.

We want guidance but *not* censorship in what we read.

We want help in speeding our reading, increasing our comprehension, and adapting our reading skill to the variety of materials we read.

We want to be stimulated by reading that holds our interest rather than bored by reading over and over again what we understood the first time.

We want to read for information as well as for sheer pleasure.

But what about the child we mentioned earlier, the one who is not reading up to his capacity? And how about the gifted child who can be described only as a poor reader?

We often fail to recognize how many factors affect our children's reading. Here are just a few which may cut down on the reading of a youngster:

*Health.* Has he had a general physical examination lately? Have his eyes and ears been tested for sight and hearing deficiencies?

*Anxieties.* Is he emotionally disturbed over anything? The list of possible causes for such disturbances can be very long, including parental arguments or separation, feelings of insecurity due to neglect or other reasons, and lack of success in his own endeavors.

*Reading Materials.* How can he want, use, and love them if there aren't any around the house or school?

Both the home and school are involved, and no amount of buck-passing can shift the responsibility entirely in either direction. It all goes back to the beginning of reading which, at its start is concerned with nothing that looks like a word, a sentence, or a

book. The alphabet hasn't even a remote relationship to reading at its inception. That point was well made by a child psychologist who sat next to a young mother at a dinner party. Recognizing the rare opportunity she had for an expert's opinion, she at one point leaned toward him and said:

"There's one thing that bothers me very much, doctor."

"What's that?"

"I've been wondering when my child should begin to learn to read."

"How old is your child?"

"She's five years old."

"For heavens sake, madam! You'd better just hurry up and finish your soup, and run home. You're almost five years too late!"

Children actually begin the reading process when they can first notice differences. Mother looks different from Daddy. The knock on a door sounds different from the ringing of a bell. Spinach tastes different from ice cream. Think this matter through and you will see how these distinguishing factors lead in time to a child's differentiating "cat" from "dog" and "was" from "saw."

These first activities of infancy in observing differences lead us to conclude that the more experiences, critical observations, and guidance in seeing, doing, hearing, and talking we can provide for our children, the more possibility there is for them to be ready for specific reading experiences later on. But, of course, that possibility is tempered by factors of health, anxieties, and reading materials which affect gifted children and their potential just as they do other children. The major difference is that we can expect the gifted to become *skilled* readers if no barrier gets in their way.

In addition to all the usual sources of help teachers have for expanding the reading horizons of children, they should not forget the newest. Perhaps it can be a danger and a threat, but it can also be harnessed for greatness. The contributions of television toward broadening the interests of children and increasing their vocabularies in productive directions are immeasurable. One children's program witnessed recently which seemed to hold the attention



about equally of a 5-year-old, a 7-year-old, and a 10-year-old, included all of the following words:

chapter	influence
laboratory	circuit
surrounded	disappear
extinguished	destination
devise	expedition
venture	desolate
instrument	inspection
audience	squadron
ceremony	adventure
domain	crater
universe	short wave

The full meaning of these words obviously could not have been clear to all three children, but their ability to understand what they had seen, as determined by a conversation after the program was finished, indicated their growth in both concepts and vocabulary through frequently hearing words of this calibre used in proper context.

Furthermore, the concern expressed by some that television will replace books has not been substantiated by children's librarians who have evidence of the expansion in reading and the borrowing of books in science and other fields largely untouched before the advent of television. In a study of children's vocabularies of some years ago, Robert Seashore practically pleaded with both parents and teachers to let children have materials appropriate to the tremendous vocabularies he found them to possess. That demand could be even more strongly made in view of the influence of TV, especially if we are serious in our desire to take our cues from the interests and needs of children.

A vital point to remember in connection with gifted children (as well as others) is that when they enter school most of them *want* to read. That is especially so if they have seen others read, have had their curiosity aroused by signs on billboards and store windows, or been exposed to some of the inexpensive children's books so readily available at the corner drugstore. It is obvious to most first grade teachers who still retain an enthusiasm of their



own in working with youngsters that the children enter school with a desire to learn, and with a sparkle and vitality that can so often kindle the chain reaction which will result in an ever-growing sight vocabulary. They are easily stimulated, want answers, and have an eagerness for fun, play, and companionship with the other children and with their teacher that can be encouraged and capitalized on—but that can also be suppressed so very easily. Do we really believe that learning takes place when a child enjoys an experience, and that such experiences legitimately belong in the classroom setting? If so, then how can we justify the frequency with which some of us deliberately throttle the spontaneous rhythms, the need for physical activity and socializing through conversation, and the pleasant connotations which preschool children have of reading?

Yes, the desire to read is strong among most first graders who are ready to read, but how strong is that desire by the time they reach second grade, especially in view of all the pressures applied to the school-beginner during that first year? And let us skip to the fifth or sixth grade for a moment; what have the reading attitudes become of *those* children when so many studies show us that most classes on that level represent *a reading spread of five or more years*? And the gifted children are not all at the top of the heap either!

### EVALUATING THE PROGRAM

Before any educational program can be evaluated it is necessary to decide on its objectives. Then the next step can be taken to see whether those objectives were attained. Although each school system may not be working toward the same set of objectives for its gifted children, one or more of the following aims are usually included.

1. Identify the gifted.
2. Develop talents and abilities of the gifted closer to their capacities.
3. Develop favorable attitudes toward education by the gifted.
4. Provide them with opportunities for creative and independent work and research.

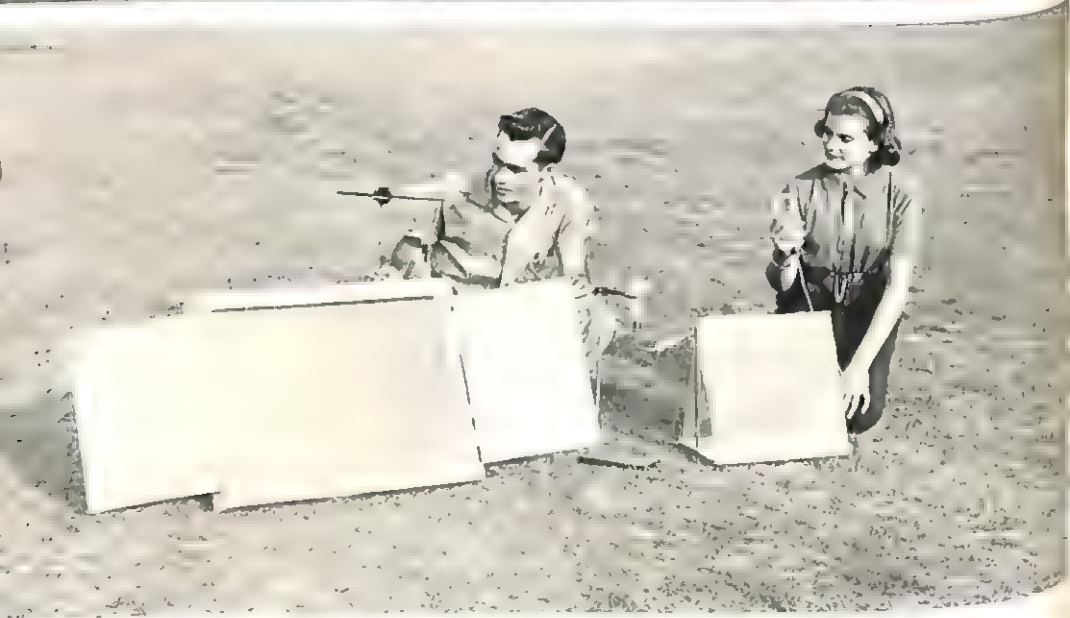
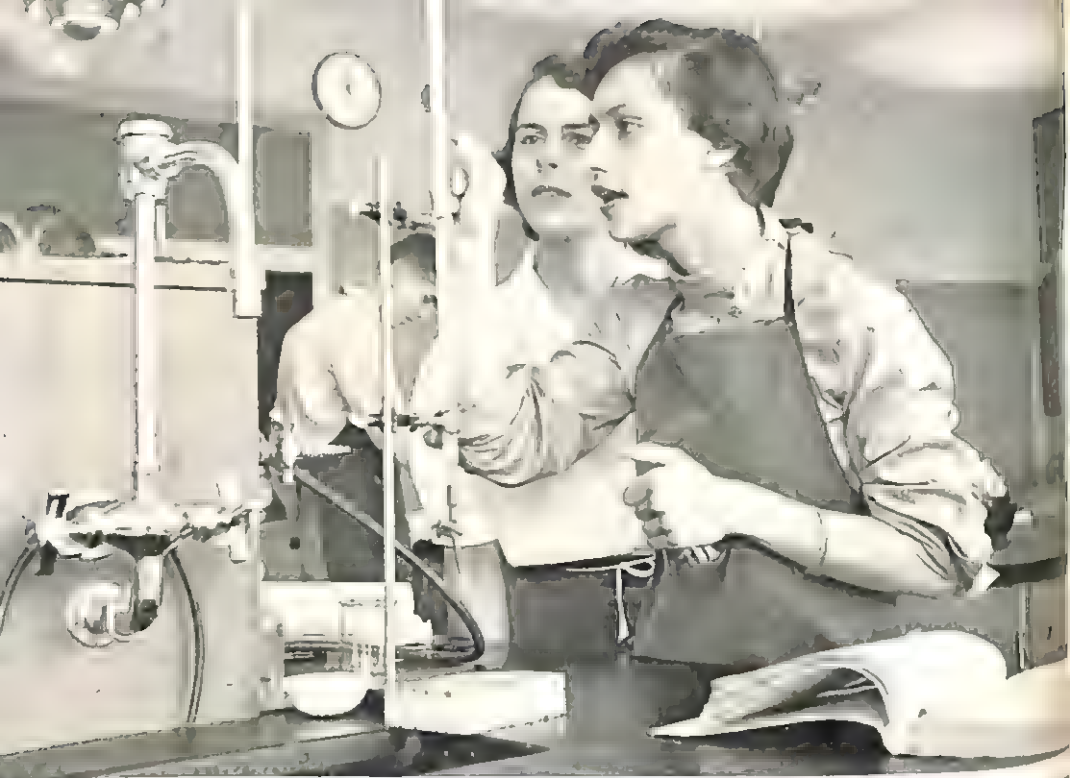
5. Develop their ability to work well with others.
6. Help them decide on appropriate vocational objectives.
7. Broaden their interests and activities to help create a well-balanced foundation.
8. Improve the teaching techniques, materials, and organization so that the gifted gain.

In order to determine the effectiveness in meeting these goals a before-and-after approach may be used. How well did the school identify the gifted before conscientiously making an effort to do so, for example. Another effective approach is that of matching groups on an experimental basis. Under that method two groups of gifted children would have to be matched on all factors except one, the one whose effectiveness is being measured. They should be matched mentally, in home background, and by age, sex, health, and so on, but not in the teaching technique to which they are exposed. Then, after a period of time, their accomplishments can be compared, and if the groups were effectively matched in all factors but that one, we can assume the teaching technique used was responsible for one group's accomplishing more than the other.

Evaluation is a key factor in teaching the gifted. We must determine whether the methods and materials we are using are better than the ones to which our gifted children were exposed before. In facts and figures the results must be there for all to see.

However, the real proof may not come during the elementary school years. It might come later—when we see how many go on to college (who might not otherwise have gone); how many go into skilled and professional occupations (who might otherwise have been lost somewhere lower on the ladder); and how many make contributions to our health, income, and welfare (who might never have contributed at all). And it might not be measurable in concrete terms, but on the more important stage of a world without cancer, war, poverty, and other blights that our gifted children are capable of eliminating—or in the pace-setting we expect our country to provide in developing satellites and peaceful adaptations of atomic, hydrogen, and other energies.





The laboratory inside and outdoors . . . the search for knowledge extends upward and outward, in all academic subjects . . . and the gifted young man and woman continue to seek answers.

*Floyd Getsinger*

# V

## *What to Do About Them—High School and Beyond*

Tossing out the following statements is like throwing in your hat first to size up a situation after you've had a fight with your wife, but we'll try it anyway:

1. Techniques and plans for teaching the gifted child on the high school and college levels have made more progress than have many other educational ideas beyond the elementary school.
2. While some people seriously maintain that teaching abilities to which a youngster is exposed decrease as the child grows older, here is one field that shows increased interest, concern, and action.

"That just can't be true!" may be the quick retort of harried high school teachers. "Five classes a day, plus study hall, lunchroom duties, clubs, activities, and meetings leave time only for *talking* about individual needs, not *doing* anything about them." College instructors might swell the chorus of protest because of all the extra duties piled on them such as night and extension classes, committee meetings, club sponsorships, advising, in addition to heavy regular class loads.

But while the progress so far is spotty, and certainly hasn't permeated every community or neighborhood, the trend is strong



enough for us to feel confident about the future in these areas. The fact that we are getting ahead is just as sure (though unfortunately not as swift) as it was for the young man in a classic little story that has recently been making the rounds.

This fellow was graduated from one of the "Ivy League" schools, and immediately went to work in the shipping room of one of the country's largest and most successful corporations. After being there just a short time he was called into the office of the chairman of the Board of Directors where he settled comfortably in a lush leather chair.

"How long have you been here now?" the chairman asked him.

"Four weeks next Saturday."

"Well, we've had some excellent reports on your work, so I have good news for you. You're to be moved up to a position of account executive, but that comes after a month's vacation with pay on your new salary schedule. That salary will be a \$400 a week with all expenses covered, a new car, and regular monthly increases. Is that all right with you?"

Without a pause or a bit of surprise, the young man replied, "Yes—Daddy."

If progress could only take place that fast in the education world! Well, don't give it another thought, because it doesn't, and won't. But we can see plenty of growth as various items in this chapter will indicate.

The high schools and colleges have been taking an unmerciful whipping in the press, books, and speeches in recent years, so let's look at a few of the facts, leaving opinions out:

Around 1900 only one in ten high school age youngsters was in school; now the figure is more than eight in ten.

At that time only one in 60 was graduated from college; now one in eight is graduated.

While half of the top quarter of our high school graduating classes do not complete college, of the topmost 2 percent at least two-thirds finish college. The drop-out reasons are many, and the schools cannot accept full responsibility.

Early in the century the academic program in high schools seemed to be appropriate for youngsters with IQ's of 110 or more; now the average academic quality is much lower, although the *range* of that quality depends a great deal upon *which* school you're talking about.

Thorough studies of secondary schools, colleges, and universities for mass versus selective education have been made by hundreds of scholarly researchers of these educational levels; this evaluation and efforts at internal improvement are continuous and analytical.

These and many other statements have serious implications for the gifted child beyond the elementary school level. That youngster faces some tough problems as he goes on, accentuated by some of his experiences up to that point. If he's had an easy time of it in the earlier years, with little challenge or stimulation, and received good grades without working for them, he may be in line for a rude awakening. The shock, whenever it comes, either in high school or college, is frequently disastrous.

Why do so many of these students leave school early? What causes them to drop out before they have reached the educational goals of which they are capable? In the answers lies the nub of our current problem involved in the scandalous loss of gifted manpower in the United States today and for the future. Let us look at them one by one:

*Financial.* Despite scholarships, governmental aid, and other sources of help there is still a close relationship between the amount of money a family has and the length of time their children attend high school and college. Just because a person can profit from the educational experience involved is no assurance that his schooling will continue. Many of us have a mistaken notion about whether education really is "free," not recognizing that in some families even the willingness of a youngster to work his way through isn't enough. The family may need his pay check every Saturday night for food—so the country loses another scientist, artist, doctor, or teacher.

*Parental discouragement.* While most parents seem to want their children to be better educated than they are, and earn more too, there are some whose point of view is, "I managed on eight years of school; 12 ought to be plenty for him." A passive attitude can be just as discouraging, and so can a general environment or neighborhood where educa-

tion is viewed only as a short-term, temporary kind of occupation for children. Indifference on the child's part can so easily develop, no matter how bright he is. His parents and pals deliberately or by implied acceptance may transfer to him the idea that high school and college somehow belong to others.

*School motivation.* Without stimulation from the school itself, education higher up the line will fail to materialize for these individual children who can gain so much from it (and give so much on the basis of it). A program that identifies the gifted child and challenges him; teachers who encourage and excite the desire to read, learn, express ideas, and who build up anticipation of more education to follow; schools that consider it their job to be just one stopping place on the way toward further study for selected students; these are some of the motivations earlier educational levels can provide. But they won't come when programs are aimed at the so-called average, with little or no consideration for the bright youngster. Nor will they come as plentifully as we need from an overworked and underpaid profession which fails to attract as many creative, capable teachers as it must have. A limited amount of high caliber teaching remains one of our most severe stumbling blocks.

*Early maturity.* All studies show that these students mature early—socially, emotionally, physically. They are ready for work, independence, responsibilities, and marriage before others, and when one is young the larger earnings and other rewards of the future seem so unimportant when compared with here-and-now. Even though they may return to the educational scene later, a time loss is wasteful for them and also for the rest of us.

We frequently do not recognize the "real" reason for doing what we do, and those who fail to finish high school or college may not either. Lack of money might *seem* to be the cause, but if there had been less classroom boredom and more stimulation of self-understanding and creativity, more respect for the specific interests which these children usually have in abundance, and more program adaptation to the needs of the fast ones, the money problem might somehow have been solved.

### COORDINATING THE PROGRAMS

The overlap between some high schools and colleges—and the wide void between others—have put gifted students in the spot-

light in many localities. Neglect of them can never again be as complete as it was just a few years ago because now we've had a short period of invaluable experimentation which has shown us two things: (1) The terrible oversight of ignoring the vital last years of high school and first years of college of those who remain in school that long; (2) the many schools eager to do something about it, but who fail to do so because they feel alone in their concern.

Current education has inherited a lot of problems and ideas that are accepted just because they are here. We do not have a unified type of educational program because our levels of education evolved at different times and from different locations: Kindergartens from Germany; elementary schools from Prussia; high schools as an American contribution; colleges from England; graduate schools from Germany. On that basis we could expect conflict, overlap, and gaps. Secondly, we have gone along unquestioningly with the generalization that age, maturity, and environment go hand in hand for all, closing our eyes to the variations in human development.

A third inheritance was the inflexibility of many of our school systems (and the folks in them) at the high school and college levels, often due to their high enrollments rather than to a real desire to hold back change and progress. Fourthly, until recent years few have dared suggest age variability in entrance to the various educational levels; 6, 14, and 18 were unbendable ages just because "everybody knows that!" Add to these the sluggish progress from research to action with *selective* acceleration, a device that a number of well controlled studies show leads to good adjustments academically, physically, and socially.

John Dewey brought some enlightenment to the scene with this statement:

All waste is due to isolation. Organization is nothing but getting things into connection with one another, so that they work easily, flexibly and fully . . . I desire to call your attention to the isolation of the various parts of the school system, to the lack of unity in the administration of



education, to the lack of coherence in its studies and methods. . . . The great problem in education on the administrative side is how to unite these different parts.

Through recent activities of the Fund for the Advancement of Education the five difficulties and the Dewey quotation above have been melted together in a sensible educational potpourri which has sharpened our thinking and brought a vigorous approach to work with the gifted. Four parts of their program have great promise for gifted children.

1. *The School and College Study of General Education*. Are eight years absolutely necessary for all on the high school and college levels? Not so, says a summary of their report. It all depends on whom we are discussing. Does it take everyone the same length of time to read a book, figure out a card play in bridge, or knit a dress? An answer of "No" obviously indicates that differences in abilities have implications in other areas.

Three preparatory schools (Andover, Exeter, and Lawrenceville) worked closely with three universities (Harvard, Princeton, and Yale) to see whether they could eliminate duplication and serious gaps in their programs. They came to the gratifying conclusion that for some youngsters a whole year of repetition could be left out. No one can assume that such overlapping exists only in that one corner of our country.

2. *A Public School Program for Students of Exceptional Endowment*. Here the far west steps into the picture with a successful experiment between a small college (Reed) and a city's public school system (Portland, Oregon). While the study was prompted by an interest in juvenile delinquency, and a feeling that many delinquents were above average in mentality, it has broadened considerably from that point. A thorough program for identification of gifted students, homeroom enrichment, and partial segregation for small special interest groups are the foundation. Teachers are kept alerted to methods and materials by in-service preparation and summer workshops. Through testing in seven talent areas and enrichment in major academic fields, plus continued alert-



ness to individual needs, these students receive all the attention that a well-informed school system and a skillfully administered college program can provide.

3. *The School and College Study of Admission with Advanced Standing.* While 1 and 2 above are glowing beacons in this field, it is really in this plan and the one that follows that even greater promise lies for our gifted children. For here on a broad tapestry the high school and college really attempt to coördinate their purposes.

The objective was to see whether high school programs could be enriched sufficiently so that the most capable youngsters could get advanced standing in college. In other words, could some of the first college courses be waived on the basis of work completed successfully earlier?

The institutions of higher learning that coöperated in the project at the start were Bowdoin, Brown, Carleton, Haverford, Kenyon (from which the program sometimes gets its name of "The Kenyon Plan"), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Middlebury, Oberlin, Swarthmore, Wabash, Wesleyan, and Williams. Others added later were Harvard, Northwestern, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Closely tied in with this program is the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program which has a present membership of nearly 200 colleges and universities and a few dozen education associations, plus the help of the Educational Testing Service. The latter, located at 425 West 117th Street, New York 27, administers tests to able high school students who have already taken college level courses, or studied them on an individual basis. Areas covered are English composition, English literature, French, German, Latin, Spanish, American history, European history, mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics. If they are passed successfully, coöperating colleges give credit and/or advanced placement.

This is hardly a "speed-up" program, for most of the students involved take only one or two advanced courses, do not expect to

finish college in fewer than four years, and plan to go on to graduate study. The record shows they have done well in college too, with a high percentage of A and B grades for sophomore courses taken during their first year in college. The following figures show how fast this idea is catching on:

1954: 18 schools, 532 students, 959 examinations, entered 94 colleges

1955: 38 schools, 925 students, 1522 examinations, entered 134 colleges

1956: 110 schools, 1224 students, 2187 examinations, entered 133 colleges

Some of the other details of this program are interesting:

Courses to be established are left to the discretion of the high schools. The high school teachers are challenged as well as the students, through course content they may not have had a chance to teach before and also by participating (as the college teachers do) in reading the examinations.

Attention is concentrated strictly on subject matter and the teaching of it.

College teachers become duplication-conscious in connection with *all* their courses.

A series of annual subject matter conferences seeks ways of articulating work on the two levels.

It becomes possible for the students to take additional courses in college which might not have been taken if this plan were not in effect.

Comments on this advanced placement program have been almost uniformly enthusiastic; even the Council for Basic Education which is usually "hard" on current trends in education devoted a large part of one of its bulletins (February, 1957) to pay tribute to it.

4. *The Program for Early Admission to College.* While the objective is the same as the project just discussed, a different approach is used. High school students academically ahead of others, and socially and emotionally at least up to them, were admitted into college early. The majority were under 16½ years old and had completed only the 10th or 11th grade. First colleges to participate

were Chicago, Columbia, Wisconsin, and Yale, later joined by Fisk, Goucher, Lafayette, Louisville, Morehouse, Oberlin, Shimer, and Utah.

An analysis of data on the college performance of more than 800 of these early entrants indicated that the students are more than holding their own, academically and otherwise. When compared with others of equal ability at the same institutions their grades showed up favorably. Being younger, they faced tougher social adjustments, but made them without difficulty in most cases.

Prof. Quentin Anderson, adviser for the program at Columbia, stated that they did better work than expected of older students. A few dropped out because they were too immature, but they were the exceptions. Of the original entrants who were graduated in 1955, 20 percent were elected to Phi Beta Kappa, double the number for the graduating class as a whole. Reports from Goucher and several of the other colleges and universities were as favorable.

In addition to the four plans outlined above, there have been a number of other experiments in the realm of accelerating the program for gifted students.

Westminster Schools in Atlanta coöperated with Emory, Oglethorpe, and Agnes Scott to broaden the coverage of the last two years in high school and the first two in college for selected students. No effort was made to shorten the college years. Areas included were social studies, science, English, mathematics, and foreign languages.

A summer session at the University of Texas was used for expanding the work of chosen high school students into college level chemistry. No academic credit was involved in this intensive five weeks' program which was planned on a coöperative basis by a university professor, a high school teacher, graduate laboratory assistants, and faculty members of other science departments. Through demonstrations, discussions, and visits to industry several objectives were sought—and it was felt they were accomplished:

1. Challenge the best students in chemistry.
2. Expedite later pursuit of college degrees.

3. Introduce new patterns of motivation into senior year of high school.
4. Explore adaptations of teaching procedures for this kind of a group.
5. Interest college faculty members in high school students and their problems.
6. Test the hypothesis that college can supplement resources and personnel of high schools.

Through plans like all of these, and the many others they will encourage, high school standards cannot help but go up for these students who are cheated when they do not. For them it will mean that they are not overlooked merely because administrative difficulties keep schools apart. If it all adds up to anything it is this: we are finally getting smart enough not to be dominated by records, details, mechanical sorting devices, and persons who refuse to consider a new idea; the youngster comes first, and that means we are on our way to common sense in education despite the problems of a mass approach.

### ENRICHMENT—SECONDARY SCHOOL STYLE

When the entire school is aimed at an above-average level as the high schools were years ago, we don't have to worry about the bright child's being forgotten. But when the average and low-average are on a pedestal because of their huge numbers, all of us, the bright ones, and the bright ones' parents have plenty to be concerned about. We are fearful that the program will be diluted to the most menial kind of training, and that it will encourage those with third grade ability to be deluded by grandiose ideas of themselves as legitimate high school students.

Balancing the program so that gifted youngsters get fair treatment calls for some of the plans already mentioned, or ideas that the school within itself can put into effect. They include some of the techniques that seem to work effectively in various settings, like a two or three track system of classes adapted to different abilities, specific honors classes for selected students, special courses to build up the program, extracurricular activities and clubs, or



lightening or increasing the course load for a student on the basis of his ability to carry it.

Just as on the elementary school level, no single plan will suit all schools or all communities. In a rural section or in small towns, a pooled plan may work best, getting together and doing what one small school cannot accomplish by itself; correspondence courses, individualized instruction or tutoring, and bringing skilled persons from the community into the schools may help. In a larger school or district the resources may encourage experimentation to the point that a solution is found which shows practical results through a reduced drop-out rate, higher academic achievement, and an increase in the number going on to college.

Regardless of the size of the school or district, some institutions fall into a rut and fail miserably to adapt to changing times and needs. (They forget that a rut has been sometimes defined as an "open-ended grave.") Flexibility in techniques, assignments, materials used, and programs offered exists in many schools. But, "What's that?" ask others who welcome tomorrow *only* if they are sure that it will be just like today.

The approach that seems most sensible for a high school which is not in a position to participate in early college admission or advanced course plans is to find out what it has on hand first of all. "Know thyself" becomes "evaluate thy program, personnel, students, community, and objectives." Not a simple task, but who among those who *know* ever said jobs related to education are simple?

Plenty of evaluative materials are available for the purpose, however. Some very interesting facts may evolve to show (1) which teachers are willing to experiment within their regular classes through the use of groups based on aptitudes, interests, and abilities; (2) which ones want to try some angles on personalized or individual instruction; (3) which students have IQ's and interests (and therefore needs) that to this time have been undiscovered and unsatisfied; (4) which materials can be bought by a community that can so easily be aroused to appreciate its responsibility for a



school of which it can be proud (and where, incidentally, it can be pleased to send its children).

While many secondary schools can profit from the varied ideas and suggestions raised in the chapter on elementary school practices, the current situation must frequently depend on the practice of enrichment within the regular classroom. It is there that the expansion in both breadth and depth must be made—at least until the awakening comes to the truth that the school is the core of our whole society and future. When that time comes, money will begin to flow, but it isn't wise to hold our breath and wait. Unfortunately we have been doing just that, and present indications are that we will remain for some time in a deep sleep whose dreams do *not* include adequate funds, housing, teachers, and equipment to meet our schools' needs.

Some adjustments in course scheduling, added courses, extra-curricular activities, audio-visual aids, laboratories, and music and art rooms may be made, but those will fill only a minor need for the gifted students. We have to get to the basic person and place—the teacher in the classroom. Although his enrichment will naturally depend on the subjects he teaches, its basic ingredients are these:

1. Broadening experiences of students and relating academic achievement and skills to them.
2. Expanding interests, creativity, and understandings.
3. Developing abilities in self-expression—oral and written.
4. Encouraging a research approach based on critical thinking.
5. Helping develop study skills.
6. Intensifying abilities in areas where talents lie.
7. Experimenting with a reorganization of the course content and techniques of teaching it.

Hundreds of courses of study available from boards of education can provide more than enough enrichment ideas for any teacher, regardless of his area. So can magazines of professional organizations in each of the subject matter fields. Here are just a few of the thousands that a visit to your closest college, university,

or public library can provide, that a few letters to selected cities may bring, or that your own school may already have on file. (By the way, if your school doesn't yet have a professional library for its teachers, don't you think it is about time something was done about *that*?) These will be obvious to the skilled, experienced teacher, and they can be expanded greatly through the use of intelligent pupil-teacher planning. It probably would take very little time for you to make a lengthier list that has more meaning for you and your classes, but these two samples can give you the idea.

#### LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

1. Use of paper-bound books for analysis of stories, style, and sequences.
2. Writing experiences close to the students' life—diaries, letters to film stars, requests for materials, descriptions of friends, acquaintances and enemies, reactions to morbid news stories or newspaper features, attempts to improve on lovelorn advice in newspapers.
3. Development of skills in locating facts, speeding reading rate and comprehension, organizing miscellaneous factual materials.
4. Understanding of criticism which is based on thought and not on emotion.
5. Analysis of symbolism, understanding of semantics.
6. Evaluation of film, television, stage, radio, and book interpretations of stories which have appeared in two or more of those media.
7. Reading poetry and plays for the fun of it.
8. Creative writing based on experimental forms of verse, essays, short stories, and scripts (radio, television, film) accomplished individually or in groups; writing and producing skits or plays.
9. Efforts to develop one's own philosophy of life.
10. Bringing together the two fields of English and social studies in expositions of human relations; neighborhood, civic, or state difficulties; or social problems related to our times. These two academic fields also could be combined in a history pageant or some other presentation.

#### SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Current events on the national and international basis as they affect us in this school and town.

2. Mobilization prior to and during wars; growth of the United States as a world power; expansion of our labor force; inventions as the key to national growth; approaching all of these through the eyes of present-day youth thinking about jobs, war, travel, and security.
3. Relationships among peoples, from the closest of neighbors to the most distant of international neighbors in a world constantly shrinking in size.
4. History, fact-versus-fiction—biographies, novels, essays, poetry.
5. Using techniques of organization, analysis, research, and reflective thinking to develop independence of thought and action.
6. Developing an understanding of the problems others face; putting ourselves in their place; obtaining insights to prejudice on the basis of race, culture, and nationality.
7. Analysis of propaganda techniques.
8. Relating music, art, and architecture to the history and geography of countries, including our own.
9. Automation as it developed in our past and affects our future.
10. Using an adult approach based on seminars, individual written and oral reports, problem-solving methods, student-teacher planning.

Lengthy lists of ideas can be extended into other academic fields such as mathematics (using community resources, teacher workshops, correlation with other subjects), foreign languages (basing them on usage, creative activities, the history and cultures of foreign countries), and all the rest.

Since most high schools do not accelerate their gifted students, but instead keep them in classes with the others, the same dangers exist here that lurk in the so-called enriched classrooms we frequently hear about on the elementary level. If classes are based on more of the same—busywork, and ignoring those who can get along well by themselves—we are playing a losing game. The bright ones cannot be left to their own resources, no matter how great they are. The expert—the teacher and the administrator—has an obligation to his profession and his public to stop contributing to the huge number of unnecessary drop-outs from our high schools.

It's long past time to stop kidding ourselves. If we don't bring enrichment practices into the regular classroom we ought to begin.

And if we say we do, let's mean it, for the old story about words being cheap certainly applies to this subject.

### WHAT ABOUT SCIENCE?

The importance of science and the interest in it encourage us to single it out for special attention. Rightly so, says a world all tensed up by an era of munitions racing and new gimmicks to dehydrate us and the rest of civilization in a momentary flash. Can't put too much emphasis on it, say the dozens of articles in popular magazines and newspapers, articles with a solid foothold in fear.

If any part of the high school and college programs is getting publicity as it relates to gifted young people, this is it. As already indicated, the scare technique of Russian superiority sets the pattern for our interest and action.

Some loose talk and loose writing, plus a naïve approach to statistics, have released a lot of false ideas about the teaching of science (and also mathematics and foreign language courses) in our high schools, especially in connection with the number of students enrolled in them. For those who want to turn the clock back, and the ones convinced by them, let us state a few figures as simply as possible.

	1900	1955
Physics	18,056	58,325 (3 times as many)
Geometry	25,650	149,204 (6 times as many)
Algebra	53,144	325,536 (6 times as many)
Science totals	436,000	3,418,000 (8 times as many)
Math totals	446,000	3,482,000 (8 times as many)
Foreign languages	390,000	1,393,000 (3 times as many)
Enrollment: high school	519,000	5,917,000 (11 times as many)
Percent of public school population in high school	3%	22% (7 times as many)
Number of high schools offering chemistry and physics	6,000	12,000 (2 times as many)
High school graduates	94,883	1,356,400 (14 times as many)

To round out this information which by itself is pretty revealing, we should add two other facts:

1. Our total population only doubled between 1900 and 1950, but the increases of students enrolled in these courses are *much* greater.
2. While currently about one-fourth of our high schools offer no chemistry they are the smallest ones, representing less than 6 per cent of our 12th grade population. The same type of figures applies to offerings in plane geometry.

Even if we go back only 20 years, instead of 50 years for our comparisons, the increases are satisfying; "... enrollments in mathematics and in principal science courses in high school are larger now than they were 20 years ago. What makes these increases particularly encouraging is that they have developed in the face of a nonincreasing population of persons of high school age—the 14-to-17-year-olds. In fact, this segment of our population, which still reflects the low birthrates of the 1930's, is *smaller* now than it was 20 years ago."<sup>1</sup>

Figures for 1955 as compared with 1949 show the same trend: 71,000 increase in high school chemistry, 163,000 in elementary algebra, 298,000 in biology, 12,000 in physics, 65,000 in plane geometry, 61,000 in trigonometry.

While high schools in 1900 were mainly college preparatory and extremely limited in the public they served, we now have a vast, expanding system of schools of which to be proud. Those who attempt to belittle by using faulty figures should be more respectful of the comprehensive coverage these schools provide—in science and other areas. The schools themselves will be the last to claim perfection, but they deserve serious recognition of what they *have* accomplished and the multitude of difficulties they still face.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *School Life*, June, 1956, pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> The growth in science offerings and in other secondary school directions is presented factually in these recent sources:

William Clark Trow, "Basic Education"—Facts and Fallacies," *School and Society*, March 16, 1957, pp. 86-88.

Walter Crosby Eells, "American and Soviet Study of Science," *School and Society*, March 31, 1956, pp. 115-117.



Even if our students clamored more for the courses and the administrators scheduled them, who would teach them on the levels of enthusiasm which would challenge the gifted? We have made a little progress in selecting persons heading toward teacher preparation courses, directing some away from this field where they can do so much irreparable damage. A broad-scale selection process is vital—screening out those who are not qualified; attracting others who are qualified but do not enter the profession; eliminating from teacher preparation activities on the college level the inept, the disinterested, the uncreative, and the dull; screening those for administration on all educational levels with the same precision. A process of hard-headed selectivity is essential for bolstering science education, just as it is in other sectors of the educative process.

How limited the supply of science teachers is shows up vividly in this example: In 1955 and 1956, colleges in Oklahoma graduated 250 bachelors of science majoring in physics or chemistry, of which only 13 indicated they intended to teach—and chances are that few of that small number really made it. Salaries and professional recognition are obviously two of the factors which attract them elsewhere.

However, on the positive side are indications that the scientific heyday has started and is really on its way. Let's look at the affirmative angles which hold promise for gifted students:

1. Grants of more than \$4 million were made by the National Science Foundation to 16 colleges and universities to support one-year institutes helping high school science teachers improve their knowledge of science subject matter. The broad coverage is indicated by the names of the 16 participating institutions; Harvard, Ohio State, Oklahoma A & M, Oregon State, Pennsylvania State,

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Walter Crosby Eells, "Let's Talk Facts!" *The School Executive*, March, 1957, pp. 41-46.

Walter D. Cocking, "A Reply to Arthur Bestor," *The School Executive*, March, 1957, pp. 7-8.

Harold Hand, "Hand Finds New Flaws in Arthur Bestor Diatribe," *Phi Delta Kappan*, March, 1957, pp. 254-256.

Stanford, Washington (St. Louis), and the Universities of Chicago, Illinois, Colorado, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Since the beginning of the program in 1951 this Foundation has made awards of more than \$36 million for various science activities, including research, conferences, and teacher preparation.

2. The Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse Science Scholarships has stimulated so much interest among high school seniors that 15,000 entry blanks are distributed each year. Winners are selected after surmounting three hurdles (science aptitude test, school officials' recommendation and scholarship record, and an essay on the subject of "My Scientific Project"). A follow-up of the winners indicates that a high percentage of them enter and are graduated from college, and they rank high in grades and in awards of scholarships and fellowships.

3. Related activities are increasing, such as achievement awards of the National Science Teacher Associations, contests of scientific and engineering societies, and science fairs. But most fascinating of all is the rash of youth organizations (e.g., the Junior Academy of Science) which are making inroads on the kinds of activities we mistakenly assume occupy all young people. Perhaps juvenile delinquency grabs the headlines, but don't you think we ought to give more recognition to the thousands of youngsters who are organizing for science conferences, demonstrations, field trips, activities related to the International Geophysical Year, and experiments on solar energy, satellites, and related subjects? And a special handshake ought to be out for the adults who encourage these curiosity-satisfying endeavors of youth.

4. Hundreds of secondary schools are demonstrating their alertness to the science problem; perhaps their fine example will attract hundreds of others. Here are capsule statements of what one or more schools in just a few localities are doing:

*Aberdeen, South Dakota*—Individual projects, extensive science library, broad club program.

*Atlanta, Georgia*—Talks, visits, and discussions especially for science students.

*Baltimore, Maryland*—Special high school which is science oriented.

*Evanston, Illinois*—Early identification of students with science potentialities by the whole science department.

*Forest Hills, New York*—Teachers in science department acting as a team to provide guidance.

*New York, New York*—Special high school which is science oriented.

*Oak Park, Illinois*—Chemistry on three levels of ability.

*Phoenix, Arizona*—Early identification plus opportunities for before and after school work in laboratories and workshops.

*Rochester, New York*—Coöperation between schools and the Rochester Council of Scientific Societies.

*San Francisco, California*—Direct assignment of the talented student to a teacher in his field for guidance.

5. At the Southwide Chemical Conference held in Memphis in December, 1956, and set up by the American Chemical Society and the Instrument Society of America, a paper was presented which had several provocative suggestions in this field. Here are a few of them:

Reduce teaching loads of science teachers to allow for additional preparation and other related work.

Add personnel in State Departments of Education in science.

Invite more scientists and engineers in the community to address pupils.

Perform science demonstrations by high school teachers and their students for the elementary schools.

Among the factors held in common by schools eager to catch up on the science needs of our times are early identification, continuous and personalized guidance, variety of books and materials, well-equipped laboratories, encouragement toward science club participation, competitions, and advanced courses, and capable, enthusiastic teachers. Perhaps some progress in this field could be made without these ingredients, but why handicap ourselves? It is tough enough to advance even *with* them!

If you are in a high school that recognizes its deficiency in this field, your question now might be, "So where do I begin?" The

course of study of your school, school system, or state may be the best starting point; you may be surprised how many specific ideas it has for you in the science field. They will fall into many of the following vehicles for getting the job done:

- Original research
- Library research
- Seminars
- Use of laboratory techniques and equipment
- Exhibits, demonstrations, displays
- Science as it relates to
  - Mental health
  - Social problems
  - Economic problems
  - Human relationships
  - Social studies
  - Language and literature
  - Everyday life
- Individualized projects and problems
- Factual versus fanciful approaches
- Frontiers of tomorrow in science
- Historical approach to science
- Films, television, radio, film strips, and other audio-visual material
- Conservation of natural resources
- College-level courses
- Participation in various extracurricular competitive endeavors

Our shortage is not of youngsters with scientific interests or capabilities. With our young car fixers, TV set tamperers, clock repairers, and electricity experimentalists, we have plenty of raw material available. The shortage is in creativity of what to do about them and in teachers who are the basic commodity in the entire design of scientific progress.

Most of us feel we can identify the gifted child with tendencies in this direction, but a few hints might help. Here are some questions you can ask about a particular child, although no one of them obviously will bring an answer which infallibly points toward science orientation or ability; even if all the answers are affirmative additional evidence would be required.

Does he prefer individual sports and social activities rather than group ones?

Does he accept responsibilities, show leadership ability, enjoy planning ahead?

Is he rather serious, quiet, somewhat introspective?

Does he like school and reading?

Is he interested in science activities, experimentation, and demonstrations?

Does he do well in them academically?

Is he an "idea person," one who gets obvious enjoyment out of discovery of either something or some idea?

Is he fairly conservative in his interests and activities, not going along with fads of his peers in entertainment, clothing, and haircuts?

Does he have patience with ideas rather than with people, and the ability to stick with a task?

Does he sometimes disappoint you in his verbal ability, which seems to lag behind his performance?

A clever little tale may help us remember the neglect of which many of us are guilty in this area. The following conversation took place between two little boys playing marbles on the school grounds:

Number 1: "There goes that new experimental jet FXZ1ZY1"

Number 2: "Yeah, did you read where they had to replace the vertical stabilizer?"

Number 1: "Sure, and not only that, but in order to get it off the ground they had to add after-burners to each nacelle in order to get more thrust."

Number 2: "There was some question about its rate of climb too. I guess the angle has a lot to do with the velocity."

Number 1: "Darn it, there's the bell!"

Number 2: "Yeah, guess we'll have to go back in and finish stringing those durn beads."

### ENRICHMENT—COLLEGE STYLE

Although our discussion of science, the other academic fields, and high school-college coordination all have serious implications



for the college program, we ought to pull it out for a short, sharp look all by itself. Maybe you've heard it said that the best teaching is done in the nursery school and primary grades, and the caliber toboggans as the child advances in school. Perhaps such statements have a background of truth since they sometimes come from college and university teachers who ought to know. Of course, even if they are true, the exceptions will be plentiful—luckily.

We cannot help but be impressed by the way in which higher education lags behind the rest in its attention to giftedness. While educational literature abounds in phrases like "take cues from the children" and "recognize individual differences," how many of us know teachers who really do those things with college-age students? Let's ask college teachers to address a few pertinent questions to themselves:

How often do we wait until we've met a class before we decide what textbook to use? (Of course, we can place the blame for early textbook requisitions on the college administration, but would most of us do any differently even if we could?)

How frequently do we bring our bibliographies up-to-date—and how much allowance do we make in them for differences in reading abilities?

How much do we know about the backgrounds of our students—home, academic work, employment, relationships with other persons? Do we *really* feel that such knowledge would help us become better college teachers and help us to adapt our materials more satisfactorily to the students? Or, do we feel it's easier to teach without such information (without it, we can blithely continue in the same old groove)?

It is not difficult to recognize the reasons for frequent lack of attention to the needs of students—large classes, committee memberships, professional writing and reading, and so many others. Although the varied demands on their time are legitimate causes for not doing what might be done with students, such demands are not sufficient to make teachers close their eyes to needs and to the neglect of this primary responsibility.

In college classes one of the items inevitably in mind at the start of each new term is the objectives of the course. What should the

students get from it? What are the major reasons for its being offered? But teachers seldom follow through with a question related to the "how" of the matter: How can they attain those objectives most satisfactorily? The evidence that they do not consider sufficiently the ways of reaching objectives is apparent in the infrequency with which they change techniques of teaching, try new ideas, or attempt to experiment with new audio-visual aids or other materials.

If they did, more would know by this time that the lecture method, with no class participation, is for many teachers one of the least effective teaching techniques. Some activity on the part of the students may result in less *coverage* of subject matter, but in all probability more will be *learned*.

Earl C. Kelley in *The Workshop Way of Learning* stresses this point effectively when he says: "Most of the time that is wasted in education is wasted when the individual proceeds on the dictum of someone else to do something that is devoid of meaning to him. By doing this, it is possible to get into so-called 'production' sooner, and to turn out more volume of 'product,' but we mistake the shadows for the substance if we judge growth on the basis of volume of material produced."

While statistical proof is lacking on the advisability of small classes as an aid to individualized instruction, most college teachers feel that they could do a more personalized job with 20 than with 100 students. Large classes encourage the use of yellowed lecture notes. Another reason enrichment comes hard on the college level is because instructors may not realize the necessity of expanding their horizons beyond the limits of the course or semester. We are in an era when knowledge of government, the world in which we live, scientific discoveries, and human relationships in the family and community are vital to our living well-adjusted lives—or living at all—and yet students are sometimes misled into thinking *the course* in its most limited sense is the end-all of everything.

Another limitation of college enrichment for the gifted, related to that narrow viewpoint, is the instructors' own lack of wide read-

ing, exchange of opinions only with those who exchange opinions with them, being satisfied with subscriptions limited to a local newspaper and one popular magazine, and feeling smug because they have stood up against the barrage of friends and advertising and still have a home "untouched" by a television set. Limiting themselves, and feeling satisfied within those boundaries because they may not know what lies beyond, may force them to set up barriers in the lives of others—or at least *attempt* to do so.

Of course, in the college or university you know best the cloistered teacher may be in the minority or may not even exist. Good for that institution and those students if that is so! But before the back-patting starts, let us take another look to see whether their skirts are really clean, or whether enrichment here too merely is a more-of-the-same idea.

A new approach of institutions of higher learning is the idea of Michigan State University—an "Honors College" for superior students. Basing admission on academic performance in the freshman year, the program is individually planned and normal graduation requirements are waived. Credit by examination, independent study under faculty supervision, and elimination of prerequisites for advanced work all help adapt the program to a person's needs. This is one of the most encouraging signs high on the educational ladder of meeting individual differences, which we talk about and so seldom do on this level.

Other colleges and universities have been asking questions of themselves as they attempt to prepare for the war and post-war population wave to hit their campuses. They are seeking answers of what to do so that their gifted are not lost. In addition to its honors program, the University of Michigan is freeing its strongest students for academic work on their own. Harvard encourages some to take advanced courses as freshmen if they are ready for them. Grinnell College in Iowa, the University of Chicago, Yale, and an increasing number of others are expanding the independent study possibilities of their brighter students.

No one is overlooking the vital spot occupied by the college

teacher. It's just that some students deserve a "plus factor" to help them reach their academic capacities.

Two other factors related to the college level warrant attention:

1. The student and his schedule are important considerations, for many in college fail to recognize their own limitations, the enrichment possibilities beyond which they are not capable of going despite their brightness. It is very revealing sometimes to block out a whole week by the hour and show a college student that the schedule he set up for himself for classes, study, outside work, social activities, and other involvements just cannot be followed—unless the same hours are frequently blacked in two or three times.
2. A study of 32,750 high school seniors in 1955 sponsored by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton showed that "the higher the ability level, the larger the percent of students planning to go to college, and of those planning to go, the larger the percent who actually do go." Such conclusions will make us be less accepting of those who insist that our colleges are overrun with unqualified students. The indications are exactly the opposite—today, our colleges and universities have both a higher percent and a much larger number of students than they have ever had capable of profiting greatly from the most enriched type of environment.

### **SPECIALIZED HIGH SCHOOLS**

While most of our school systems and communities have developed high schools of the comprehensive type, where a wide variety of courses and students fill their classrooms, some have encouraged schools with major areas of concentration. Despite that concentration, however, the program is broadened so that the students also get a foundation in cultural fields. They are far from being narrowly defined "trade schools." With students selected on the basis of ability and programs planned to satisfy their primary interests and vocational goals, these schools feel they use the time of gifted students to their capacities more than if they were part of the regular high school program.

One of the best examples is New York City's system of specialized high schools. It includes the following:



Brooklyn Technical High School (boys)  
High School of Music and Art (coeducational)  
Bronx High School of Science (coeducational)  
Stuyvesant High School (boys)  
High School of Performing Arts (coeducational)

The selectivity and desirability of these schools is indicated by the fact that four or five times as many apply as are accepted, the average IQ is 125 to 130, and about 90 percent go on to college. In one year their students won \$2 million in scholarships.

General courses are related to the students' special interests so that a genuine core approach is used, integrating the curriculum around the strongest abilities and aptitudes. In the High School of Science, for example, it is possible for the student to take four years of mathematics, start his science emphasis in the second year; and in addition cover three or four years of social studies, English, foreign language, health education, drafting, and shop. He will also have courses in art and music appreciation, be exposed to both individual and group guidance, and participate in extracurricular club and other activities. Hardly a limiting program; is it? While the students frequently aim toward science careers (medicine, engineering, dentistry, scientific research) they are also equipped to go on in law, accounting, teaching, or business. In a period of nine years its students won more honors in the Science Talent Search than did students from any other school.

The proponents of these schools, including parents and alumni, do not feel they need be defended. The success of their students in college and on the job speaks for itself. But they sometimes feel compelled to acknowledge and reply to comments about them:

Another criticism concerns itself with the issue of democracy. . . . To those who work with the boys and girls in specialized schools day by day, this criticism brings only smiles. They would challenge the critics, invite them into the school to observe the children at work and at play. In all that they do, they exemplify a free society in pursuit of democratic ideals in democratic fashion. Modesty rather than snobbishness is the quality that predominates. There are leaders and there are intelligent followers. The purpose around which the school centers cannot



and does not eliminate individual differences. The range of heterogeneity has been reduced sufficiently to make learning more effective and in keeping with ability to learn. *Democracy cannot mean that it is more important for a student to reach the teacher's minimum than to reach his maximum.*<sup>3</sup> (Our italics.)

## OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS

So that this doesn't become a "New Yorker's Map of Educational Accomplishment," let us start across the country and see what other areas are doing.

A last peek back at the big city is necessary because of the 85-year-old Hunter College High School for girls where the IQ range reaches up to 165. Students are grouped by achievement, the program is comprehensive and tough, and they almost all go on to college.

We will stop for a longer look at a few other schools, but the parent or teacher who wants to see the secondary school program at its best for gifted youngsters must recognize that *many* are experimenting, adapting, and working hard at the task. Among them are Central High (boys) and Philadelphia High School for Girls, both in the same city and with students whose IQ's usually range upward from 110; Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati; Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts; the San Diego secondary schools; Passaic, New Jersey; Chaffee High School in Ontario, California; Oak Park and River Forest High School in Illinois; and dozens of others.

Because no one of them has the answer of what is best for another school, and few are presumptuous enough to insist they have the solution even for their own situation, we can view their efforts with real satisfaction. The odds of money, time, materials, and personnel are usually against them, but they are trying to provide the best for *their* best, and deserve all the encouragement a grateful public can give.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Witty (ed.), *The Gifted Child*, New York, D. C. Heath and Company, 1951, p. 232.

Even though many of the high schools warrant an intensive appraisal of their approaches, we will take time to view only two in more detail—a large midwestern public school and a small southwestern private school.

**EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL,  
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS**

The talented youth program of this large high school has been described in the following terms for parents and other interested persons.

As you know, ours is a community well favored with wealth to support a high level educational program. The parents of our children generally have had almost two years of college. A large percentage hold degrees and a good number have done advanced work. They are deeply interested in education. Each year about seventy-five percent of our graduates enter college. Because of this background and our students' generally high level of academic aptitude, we have been able to offer a strong academic program. . . .

During the past several years we have expanded our honors program and have participated in the School and College Study of Admission with Advanced Standing. Recently we have been a part of the Illinois Curriculum Program's Project for the Improvement of Thinking, a program of enrichment in our regular academic program. At the same time Science Seminar for the gifted in science has grown out of our participation in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search.

To get to specific questions, we believe that a sound program for the gifted, or talented, is carefully planned to include consideration of identification, special provisions, continuous and searching evaluation, and revision. It provides for the early identification of high potential in all fields, not just in the academic subject fields. Many criteria are involved. High achievement and high IQ are not the only clues to talent. . . .

As for the additional expense there is no specific item for gifted child education. However, it is obvious that there are additional expenses, those arising from smaller classes and special books and equipment. There is, of course, special planning that members of various committees must take from other activities to do. Costs are allotted to various items in the budget, such as subject departments and teachers' salaries.

Committees give overall direction to our current planning for our

gifted. A committee made up of the college counselor, the chief visiting counselor, the head of the testing and evaluation program, the administrative assistant, and the superintendent takes the leadership in our program for the talented youth. This committee works in coöperation with Mr. A. Harry Passow and Mrs. Miriam Goldberg of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute's Talented Youth Project to plan steps in developing our program for the talented. To review and help implement plans, there is an advisory committee made up of this planning group, the chairmen of the academic departments, two department chairmen representing the arts, the three remaining members of the guidance department, and the teacher of Science Seminar. These committees then work through the departments and the counselors toward establishing a plan for educating the gifted.

From our experience, the most important first step is to obtain tentative agreement upon what is meant by talented. For us, they are all those pupils with especially high potential in one or more general or specific areas, pupils whose potential cannot be adequately developed without special provision with the curricular, extra-curricular, and counseling programs. Included are the academic and arts areas and the general area of leadership or human relations. For our school this group will probably include about twenty-five percent of the student body.

Important also is the initial understanding that a full program of provisions cannot be developed all at once. It must be understood that a full program must grow out of revisions of the present and experimental provisions. Very early the whole staff must be involved in determining what is meant by talent in concrete form, in identifying tentatively the talented, and in considering their special needs. The methods of identification, provision, and evaluation must be evolved over a period of time through the efforts of the whole staff.

We have tried to involve the parents through our regular program of interpretation of standardized test data by the counselors and through regular parent and teacher contacts. We have kept our parents abreast of our whole school program, including special provisions for the talented, through articles in our publication of "Here's Your High School" and our "Curriculum Guide," both of which are mailed home. There has been some communication through the Lay Advisory Council and our PTA's parent education program. However, we have not worked coöperatively with parents in planning our program for the gifted.

So as not to be guilty of giving you only the "beautiful generalities, and nothing specific," here are a few very specific things we have tried to do. Each department has developed a list of characteristics of the talented individual in its area of study. Teachers and counselors have

then developed lists of individuals with outstanding potential. A file has been set up to include all such individuals. Copies of this file are available to all members of each department in the office or room of the department chairman, to all counselors in the home rooms, and to the planning committees in the main office. The files are revised from time to time as are the departmental lists of characteristics. We have expanded our criteria for selection of honors and college level classes. We have set up a reviewing procedure for students who have sought to elect more than one college level class. Their capabilities are matched with the demands of the rest of their curricular and extra-curricular programs. In a number of cases they are asked to make a choice between college level courses.

We have an interview-study of under-achievers, over-achievers, and high-achievers to get some insights into the adequacy of our present provisions for our students and their needs. This has had implications for counselor interviews and counseling follow-up that we have not as yet been able to develop. Out of this have grown several attitudes inventories, developed in coöperation with the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute and administered to substantiate some leads that we think we see in the interview study.

An experiment has been agreed upon and is being set up in our English honors program. We plan to test the effectiveness of the honors class provisions as contrasted with specially planned provisions and regularly planned provisions for the honors level students in regular classes. We shall be testing the relative burden put on the class room teachers in each of these situations. We shall be evaluating the effect of special honors class provision on pupils who especially want to be assigned to honors classes and those who do not. Finally, we are looking for the effect on regular students of the presence or absence of honors students in their classes.

In our critical thinking project we are at present testing the effectiveness of the planned teaching of principles of logic, semantics, and the scientific method in the academic courses of English, math, science, and the social studies. This may lead to a very fruitful form of enrichment, especially valuable to our gifted. We feel that we may be developing a fundamental approach to the underlying meaning of much of our subject content.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> From a statement prepared at Evanston Township High School entitled *Excerpts from a Recent Report on ETHS Talented Youth Program*, received from Jean Fair, Testing and Research Chairman, Talented Youth Committee, Evanston Township High School.



Evanston Township High School's program has several points of emphasis: (1) It involves a lot of people; (2) it involves a lot of work; (3) it keeps the needs of the students in clear focus; (4) it is subject to constant evaluation and change. Few high schools are ready to match its plan—but many should try to accomplish at least some of its objectives, adapted to their own situation.

### VERDE VALLEY SCHOOL, SEDONA, ARIZONA

This school, surrounded by cathedral-like red rock formations, with green pine trees at their base and in part of the gently sloping valley beneath, is near Sedona, Arizona. It is in the center of the state where desert and mountains meet at the entry to Oak Creek Canyon and within easy driving distance of Grand Canyon. From each of its buildings are clearly visible the red mountains creating a secluded setting which the school's director and founder, Hamilton Warren, travelled 40,000 miles to find.

To reach the school one goes through country where many western motion pictures (in color) have been filmed, and fords a clear, cool stream which looks like a transplanted midwestern creek. At a slightly more distant point on the way to the school, the visitor may have travelled through the "ghost town" of Jerome, over Mingus Mountain and Yarnell Hill, or through the Oak Creek apple country. Despite the beauty of the approach to the school, nothing prepares one completely for the perfect red-and-green setting, with the white Spanish buildings which somehow seem part of the landscape.

The Verde Valley School was planned as a secondary school "for boys only" during its first year, and for both sexes thereafter, but according to Mr. Warren, "The first boy I registered was a girl," so it immediately became coeducational. This businessman-turned-educational administrator, whose dream the school is, has a broad background which includes studying at Harvard School of Business Administration, organizing International Educational Pictures, Inc., serving in the U.S. Department of State and the Office of War



Information, and travelling widely in Europe and North America. In the school catalog, which incidentally is a fascinating departure from the dreary descriptive materials published by most educational institutions, he clearly states the philosophy behind his founding of the school:

Ours is a storm-ridden world. Only as we learn to coöperate in the family, community, nation and world can we advance. Unless we possess international security we cannot lead peaceful lives within our national boundaries. Until we achieve coöperation between labor and management, between racial and religious groups, we cannot make real progress towards a peaceful world.

Our nation has become great through the combined talents and skills of peoples of many racial origins who are now American citizens. When we speak disparagingly of foreigners, we speak disparagingly of ourselves.

Today the world belongs to the peoples of all nations and to this world each one of us is responsible. None of us—however secure personally we may feel—can ignore degradation and unrest anywhere on this earth. . . .

We believe that these principles and responsibilities should be developed in the young while their minds are still flexible. The Verde Valley School has been specifically planned to stimulate this vision.

Because so much time is spent individually on the students, a careful selection process brings them to the school in the first place, a process based in part on interviews, academic records, social relationships, and a minimum IQ of 110. No so-called problem children are knowingly admitted, nor is the school a spot for placing children of the rich who might be vacationing in nearby resort areas. All of the students go on to college after completing a program here which is basically college preparatory; because the staff feels they are giving so much to individual students, they hope—and have reason to believe—that these young people have leadership qualities in addition to other above-average abilities.

A deliberate effort is made to avoid the educational fragmentation of which so many other public and private secondary schools are guilty. The integration in Verde Valley's curriculum is evident

in its freshman year, as well as on all other levels. The first year History is on Greece and Rome, the English program concentrates on Hellenic literature, and both include a study of the Old Testament and the philosophy of Socrates and Plato. Their art work is on classical architecture from Greece up to the present day, and music, science, and mathematics are related to work in other classes.

There is some cross-visitation of faculty, joint use of related audio-visual and other materials, and yet, "at no time is correlation permitted to interfere with the specific requirements of the individual courses or to stand in the way of the spontaneous creative work so vital to teacher and student alike." At present, correlation is largely a desire more than an achievement, but the hope is to go increasingly in that direction.

The academic program can be summarized as follows:

1. The average student load is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  courses, adding up to a combined class and study hall assignment of 37 hours a week, and a school year of 178 academic days.
2. Four years of English, two foreign languages, three to five years of history, two or more years in mathematics and in science, and two years in the history and appreciation of music and art constitute the basic requirements.
3. The languages are Spanish, German, and French. History is approached from the cultural, rather than the political or military side. Art and music are closely correlated with drama whenever possible.
4. The academic program meets the most rigorous entrance requirements of leading universities, and the record shows that to date no graduate has ever failed out of his or her college or university program.
5. Classes meet each day except Sunday and during all vacations of the nine month academic year except for three weeks at Christmas. That schedule permits four weeks for field trips.
6. The average class size is 10 to 12, with a range of four to 18. Usually when classes get beyond 18, they are split into two sections.

7. "Whenever it is both desirable and feasible, classes are sectioned to allow groups within them to proceed along different lines, or at varying speeds."

Two parts of the school program have been publicized more than any of the others—the work plan and the field trips—because they are among the factors which differentiate this school from many others. However, its strong academic program should probably be the starting point for those interested in knowing what the school stands for and is accomplishing.

The work program has as one of its objectives the building of respect for all kinds of work. In addition to the usual boarding school tasks of waiting on tables, washing dishes, and cleaning classrooms and dormitories, these students help in construction of new buildings, installing underground utilities, and maintaining school equipment. They drive trucks and tractors, constitute stable, maintenance, and construction crews, handle the garbage detail, and do much of the painting. The share of each in the work program is now about six or seven hours a week, cut down from earlier figures because of increasing academic pressures.

The field trips cover about 5,000 miles each year, including visits to the Navajo and Hopi Indian Reservations and more than three weeks in Mexico. These are neither tours nor vacation jaunts, although there is a tremendous amount of enjoyment in them for both faculty and students. Each of the major trips is done on a camping-out basis, conducted on specially constructed trucks. Students live with Navajo and Hopi families, hear persons who know the country and the people, and choose a research project on which to work intensively.

The Navajo student projects, for example, included trading posts, tribal enterprises, medical service, child welfare services, social service, education, arts and crafts, and religion. No second-hand kind of research satisfies these students either; they go in small groups, with or without faculty members, to see what is really going on, talk to the persons involved, and experience some of the problems about which they heard.

In addition to these major trips, a number of weekend excursions are taken; they may be to Coconino Forest on a logging project or to visit a cattle roundup. Or the entire school may visit Phoenix and form groups to study the Salt River irrigation project, city government, and labor-management relationships.

The educational quality of these trips is important. Students handle jobs such as purchasing supplies in Mexico (transacting their business in Spanish), maintaining the mechanical equipment, preparing daily menus based on diet and budget requirements, and handling baggage. Faculty personnel perform advisory functions, but the entire operation is actually in the hands of students.

Even before the school's first year began with a student body of only 18, five hundred teaching applications had been received. It was a difficult job to find qualified faculty, persons who combined the ideological principles on which the school was founded, with an interesting, widely travelled background. The head of the language department was born in Spain of Swiss and Italian parents, and studied in France, Switzerland, the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The history department chairman has an impressive background which includes study in France, England, and Switzerland, and research, teaching, and travel on most of the continents.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Do you know that every year dozens of lesser publicized scholarships in lesser known colleges go begging, with no takers? That thousands don't go on to college because they cannot afford to? That the information on scholarships is widely distributed, but often filed or thrown away before those most concerned see it?

Let's not beat around the bush on who is to blame—the counselor who directs a questioning student to a cluttered bulletin board and offers no further help or advice; the parent whose interest doesn't extend to the action stage, to writing or asking for information, and doing it early and persistently enough to get it; the high school student who lets himself be so involved in the present that he never



thinks about the future even though it is practically here; the teacher so bowed down with work that he fails to notice and *do* something about the few who are academic stand-outs.

Details are abundantly available as near as the closest library. For 15¢ you can get started through use of an excellent booklet recently released by a governmental agency: *Scholarships and Fellowships: A Selected Bibliography* by Richard C. Mattingly. It is Bulletin 1957, Number 7, prepared under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. You might consider other useful sources, such as the thorough three-volume work of S. Norman Feingold, *Scholarships, Fellowships, and Loans*, published by the Bellman Publishing Company, Inc., Cambridge 38, Massachusetts; and *You Can Win a Scholarship* by Brownstein, Weiner, and Kaplan, published by Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 343 Great Neck Road, Great Neck, New York.

College catalogs list the scholarships available directly from the institutions, but there are a lot of agencies awarding them: Alumni associations, industrial groups, large corporations, women's clubs, philanthropic groups and individuals. A little later we will give special consideration to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation and the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students, two organizations which have made impressive strides in helping gifted students continue their education. Some individual communities have worked hard to tap all local and regional resources for scholarship aid. The New England Colleges Fund Association, Inc. is an example of a regional resource.

Individual corporations have also used a localized approach. The Hughes Aircraft Company set up a special scholarship program for Los Angeles high school juniors and seniors for the summer of 1957. The students chosen received a summer research job plus a \$400 grant to be used toward going to a college of their own choice.

Being qualified for a scholarship does not appear all of a sudden late in a high school career. Building up those qualifications began



long, long ago, during the early high school years, the elementary school program, and parental guidance in the earliest months and years, continuing on into formal schooling. All the ideas expressed in this chapter, and the last one, are preparation for filling out a form early in the senior year of high school which may result in an award.

Grades, athletic prowess, and abilities in drama, art, music, debating, or writing, may be the opening wedge. It is easy to see how vital are the encouragement, atmosphere for self-expression, and development of potentialities during the early years, long before a great big dollar sign suddenly takes on importance for this coming September. Early awareness of scholarship possibilities comes when a youngster is five, not 15!

One important cautionary note—accepting a scholarship *can* be a bad mistake. We may be tempted to accept, but what about other considerations, such as these: Is this a good college? Can it assist toward the personal vocational goals of this student? What kind of academic and social atmosphere does the college provide? All the questions related to college-choosing for those going on must be asked for the bright ones, too; later we will take another glance at the task of choosing an appropriate college.

### ADDING IT UP

With concern for the gifted surging up to the high school and college levels, the situation brightens considerably. Of course, thousands of teachers still feel it is their responsibility to teach to a point where everyone can absorb what is going on, and it may take a minor miracle (or the passage of time for both young and old unqualified teachers) to bring a change in the scenery.

But teachers' and parents' groups, administrative activities, and the presence on our conscience of young people being lost and wasted are all urging us to move along in our efforts. Our encouragement comes from the students for whom an observant teacher or parent lights the way. It also comes from words like these which

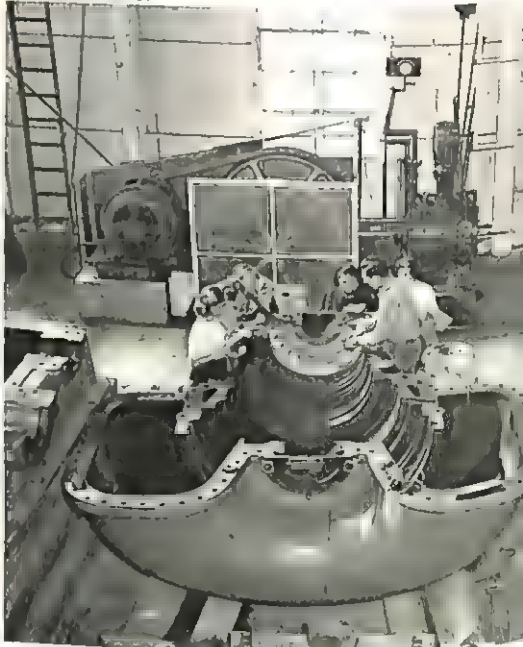
indicate our failings, less serious today than they were when this statement was written, but still uncomfortably with us:

The danger that confronts this country is not that it is providing equality of educational opportunity; the danger lies in the cult of mediocrity. No country has a stronger tradition of faith in education than the United States; in no country is there more information available on differences of ability than in the United States; and yet with all the faith and with all the knowledge less is being done than elsewhere to give the best education to those who might do the most with it. A fallacious interpretation of democracy has tended to reduce equality of opportunity to identity of education. . . .<sup>5</sup>

No longer can we afford the luxury of equality that penalizes our gifted children as they progress up the educational ladder and frequently topple off. The solutions are plentiful, but it will take time of the few to encourage action by the many.

<sup>5</sup> I. L. Kandel, "Leadership and Education in Other Times and Other Lands," *Teachers College Record*, April, 1939, p. 573.





Here it's a power plant—but it could be a weather station, a flight over the water shed, or visits to post office, newspaper, or dairy . . . the links between school and community become stronger, and all children profit, including the gifted . . . contacts lead to interest and concern . . . and to scholarships and other kinds of support.

*Edward Gurr*

# VI

## *What to Do About Them—Help from Outside Home and School*

TURN the other cheek; hide our heads in the sand; ignore the problem and maybe it will go away and not bother us any more. Many of us in our own homes and schools have tried those approaches long enough, but the gifted child is just a persistent enough little fellow to keep tugging at our trouser legs and skirts and insisting, "I'll be six years old only *once!* I need your help *now!*"

He is very much like the children who were sent up to bed early because their parents were having company for dinner. Right in the middle of the dinner the two youngsters came downstairs without a stitch of clothing on, walked around the table several times, and talked to people but received no answer. In fact, the only visible sign that anything had happened was in some deep red, embarrassed adult faces. Finally the young ones gave up, and quietly went upstairs to bed. But the next morning two angry parents brought up the subject.

"How could you dare do such a thing?" they asked.

"Oh, Mother, it worked! It worked!"

"What worked?"

"Your vanishing cream! We rubbed it on all over, and they didn't even see us!"



But it's not so with gifted children. No amount of hocus-pocus will make them disappear into the woodwork, no matter how much we ignore them and act as though we wish they didn't exist. Despite our neglect they are here to stay.

What can be done for them in our homes, schools, colleges, and universities is only part of the task of meeting their needs and helping them work up to the heights of which they are capable. Communities, organizations, business, labor, and governmental agencies all belong in the act. While their contributions so far have been spotty and almost self-conscious, big beginnings have been made. These spontaneous starts indicate that if some can make a contribution so can thousands of others, that we are on our way but have a long way to go, that while the mural has a complete background we still need to insert the persons and details to finish the picture.

### COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

In getting something done for gifted children it makes no difference who leads the way. The old argument of schools as leaders or followers of communities has evaporated because now most of us realize the important thing is getting a job done, and getting it done fast.

We have seen how many laymen are active in boards of education, citizens' advisory committees, school survey teams, and parent-teacher organizations. While persons professionally involved in the field of education may sometimes be concerned about policies being set up by nonprofessional persons, the job of school building, teacher recruitment, teacher preparation, *and* developing programs to meet individual differences of children are vast, bigger than all of us. Besides, what better way is there of getting the problem before the people than to get the people right into the thick of it?

Those of us most concerned about the tragic waste welcome whatever glimmer of interest a community demonstrates, for interest, action, and money are close companions. What the community can do depends on various factors:

Is it even aware that there is a problem related to gifted children? Is it sophisticated enough on the subject to know that "eccentric," "queer," and "weak" as descriptive terms for the gifted belong in an era that didn't know better because it didn't have the facts?

Does it accept the importance of the problem and put it in the same league as juvenile delinquency, housing, comic book reading, and traffic accidents?

Does it recognize that the school and family do not exist in a vacuum but are part of the whole community and therefore cannot be separated from it when the education and development of the gifted child are discussed?

Can it accept the premise that beauty, activities, and facilities *available* for all actually *benefit* all in the long run, even though only a minority seems to profit from them at the present time? Does it recognize and accept its responsibility for enriching the lives of its adults as well as its children?

Can it see that there is a significant difference between equality of opportunity and equity, that democracy is based more on providing for individual needs than it is on giving the same to everyone regardless of the ability to absorb the equal distribution?

While some communities are still preoccupied with straightening out their politics and keeping an eye on the few who are living off the many, others have gone on to activities in the realm of making this short life of ours more productive and happy. The gifted child may be only an incidental recipient of the benefits which are available for everyone, but he can frequently find in his neighborhood or town the broadening experiences that embellish the day-by-day, repetitive existence of which so many of us are captives.

Below are just a few of the hundreds of communities in action toward creating an environment for a better life—not all of their projects and plans are included by any means. Groups or individuals concerned about the gifted child can borrow, adapt, adjust, and no doubt improve, based on their local facilities and personnel.

*Bernardsville, New Jersey*—A playground setting was used to get numerous activities in operation, such as crafts, creative writing, dramatics, music, and painting.

*Brooklyn, New York*—Facilities of the Children's Museum have been utilized for more than 50 years. Clubs include the following categories: animals, birds, chemistry, construction, experiments, history, marine life, microscopes, nature, photography, physics, science, stamps.

*Chicago, Illinois*—Women's groups in Chicago and its northern suburbs sponsor Arden Shore, the only home and school for dependent boys of superior intelligence.

*Dallas, Texas*—A community writing project, with poetry as the kick-off, was inspired by the idea of one librarian. The trail from poetry to other kinds of literature (through writing and appreciation) and into other arts and crafts on both a vocational and avocational basis is not long, not when an already existing though submerged interest is encouraged to come to the surface.

*Dayton, Ohio*—Community interest and support came readily to the suggestion of a boys' choir. Here is a sound meeting of talent and intelligence, seeing giftedness in terms of that talent.

*Lawrence, Kansas*—Art is the focal point of a summer workshop program for children set up with the facilities of the University of Kansas.

*Palo Alto, California*—Through a Children's Theater, interests related to dramatics are permitted to express themselves.

*Phoenix, Arizona*—The National League of American Pen Women's sponsorship of a poetry hour and an annual state poetry contest, participation in national science competitions, and children's activities in the city's library are among the many vehicles for enrichment on a community basis.

*Quincy, Illinois*—The Quincy Youth Development Project, under the direction of the University of Chicago, has approached the problem through the conservation and development of human resources and what an average community can do about them. The assessment of children's artistic talents by artists and creative writing abilities by writers, and many special interest clubs, help put a spotlight on areas commonly neglected.

*Worcester, Massachusetts*—For more than 35 years the Worcester Art Museum has had children's classes from the nursery school level up; music and drama also receive special attention.

All of these activities have their core in the community outside the school system, but the schools can contribute greatly to their success. As indicated earlier, there are dozens of communities where the schools have taken a leadership role in pulling the

gifted child out of his cultural and educational no man's land. Here are just a few of them:

*Castro Valley, California*—partial separation.

*Cleveland, Ohio*—major work program.

*Long Beach, California*—enrichment.

*New York, New York*—special high schools (also the Mayor's Committee on Scholastic Achievement).

*Palo Alto, California*—enrichment.

*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*—experiment in early school entry; enrichment.

*St. Louis, Missouri*—separate classes.

*University City, Missouri*—partial separation.

As we look at individual communities, these and many others are indications of real accomplishment. But another angle shows us how limited in scope is the school coverage related to gifted children. A recent survey of the U.S. Office of Education questioned directors and supervisors of special education in local school systems. Of 153 reporting, only 21 said they accepted a special responsibility when it came to the gifted children in their schools. That figure was *lower* than it was for any of the other nine areas of exceptionality listed, which ranged from 112 for mentally retarded to 51 for blind. It all adds up to one more indication of the unconscionable neglect of gifted youngsters in our schools and communities.

However worthwhile school plans are in areas where they have been developed in detail, it is in the broader arena of the community at large where additional promise lies in respecting the powers of gifted children. Programs and activities for adults cannot help but expand their own horizons and make them more responsive to the creative potential of children. Such programs cannot be offered without a comparable plan in operation for children, and once the latter is started, the sponge-like qualities of our bright children will force a continuation and increase in coverage and services. Special summer programs, libraries, museums, theaters (especially children's theaters), and art centers fit into the over-all community plan.



"That's all fine for the city," you might be thinking, "but what about the smaller towns and rural sections? What do they have to offer?" The folks who come from them will have the answer, "Plenty!" Individually or coöperatively they have singers; dancers; story tellers; experts in art, ceramics, carpentry, and leather work; and retired businessmen with hobbies that can intrigue children *and* adults. It may take a little more digging than in the big city where we advertise and brag more, but the skills certainly are not concentrated exclusively in our population centers.

The place to begin may be in a community survey, asking questions like these:

What do we think about our gifted children, or do we think about them at all?

How many do we have, and what are they like?

What do we want to do about them in this community?

What facilities do we have to start out with, and what do we need to accomplish a job of which we can be proud?

Other steps that may help are to do a little looking, asking, and writing to find out what others are doing. How did Quincy get started, and what has it accomplished? What were the details of the Bridgeport plan when the whole town mobilized itself so that the human resources of its veterans would not be wasted? How can those details be adapted to help eliminate the waste of a little boy or girl who sits quietly in the corner of a classroom and restricts his or her outside activities to the interesting (but limited) experiences with a television set? Who are the people in schools, business, labor, and various institutional organizations willing to participate in a coöperative community board to tackle this problem of locating, organizing, and using available resources?

Time, money, energy, and interest all exist. However, it may take pin-pointed seeking by an active few to find them and then piece together a plan that will make sense to even the most demanding, dollar-conscious businessman in the community. If he has a bright child of his own, he'll know what you are talking about. So will he if his employees work far below a comfortable capacity, his



labor turnover is fast, and his profits are more limited than maximal efficiency would make them. There is more than one nerve-end to touch.

### THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION

While we admit the necessity of other ingredients to get a worthwhile project into operation, it mainly takes men and women who are both unselfish and practical. A master plan like that of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation evolves only when the proper factors are molded together; then when we look at the results we feel ourselves nodding in approval. It looks good on paper, and it works well in action.

The corporation's purposes are as follows:

1. To discover throughout the country the most able youth and to make it possible for these talented young people to get a college education regardless of their financial situation.
2. To make it easier for business enterprises to contribute effectively to the support of higher education by the scholarship route.
3. To provide, in one organization, a single national talent search and scholarship program that will reduce wasteful duplication of operation and expense, and will, at the same time, protect fully the natural interests and purposes of the donors.

In order to accomplish those purposes, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation has available \$1 million a year for ten years to provide scholarships for the higher education of bright students. Grants go to the selected students who need them and also to the colleges and universities they have chosen to attend. In addition, the corporation has \$8 million to match contributions from donors. The program is open to all public and private secondary schools, and each scholarship is pegged with the donor's name.

The procedure of this program which began in the fall of 1955 goes this way:

1. All participating schools are asked to select the outstanding 5 percent of their senior classes as available candidates. These

students will take a screening test in their own schools, but administered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. *It is especially recommended that students of unusual ability who do not plan to go to college be encouraged to compete.*

2. The highest scorers will move up to the next step and take the Scholastic Aptitude Test of the College Entrance Examination Board.
3. Those who do best at Stage 2 will be asked to provide scholastic records, biographical data, and other information.

On the basis of all data available the final selections are made. The results of the first selection program (1955-56) provided these details:

58,158 highly selected seniors participated, representing 10,338 secondary schools.

5078 semifinalists were selected (from 2654 schools), some from every state, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

554 scholarships were awarded, making this program the largest independent scholarship program in the history of American education. About three-fourths of the winners were boys and one-fourth were girls. The value of the four-year scholarships awarded (including supplementary grants to colleges) is estimated at about two and three-quarter million dollars.

Winners will attend 158 different colleges. Over 80 percent of the winners will go to private colleges.

About a third of the Merit Scholars will attend college within 100 miles of their homes, and two thirds will not travel over 500 miles to college. About 5 percent will travel over 2000 miles to college.

Career objectives include a wide range, but research, engineering, science, and teaching predominate. Other career objectives are ministry, art, music, creative writing, farming, business, and others.

About a quarter of the Merit Scholars came from schools with a senior class of under 100 students, and 19 came from schools with a class of under 25.

The minimum stipend was \$100; the maximum was \$2100. Its size is based on the need of those selected.

This "open-ended" program, started with \$20,500,000 provided by the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation, encourages

participation by many others. A broad cross section of U.S. industry has been supporting it, as indicated below, to the extent of one to 100 merit scholarships; they will no doubt be joined by others during the next few years.

American Bank Note Company  
American Cyanamid Company  
Arkansas Opportunity Fund  
Association of Iron and Steel Engineers  
Boeing Airplane Company  
Bryant Chucking Grinder Company  
Federal Postal Employees Association  
The Food Machinery and Chemical Foundation  
General Dynamics Corporation  
The General Foods Fund  
The Gillette Company  
The B. F. Goodrich Fund  
Johnson Motor Lines  
McGraw-Hill Publishing Company  
The Mead Corporation  
National Distillers Products Corporation  
Ohmite Manufacturing Company  
The Pittsburgh Plate Glass Foundation  
The Sears-Roebuck Foundation  
Signode Foundation  
Standard Oil Foundation  
Standard Rate and Data Service  
Stewart-Warner Corporation  
Time Incorporated  
Universal-Cyclops Steel Corporation  
Van Raalte Company  
The Sidney J. Weinberg Foundation  
F. W. Woolworth Company

If they care to, the donors can specify for their scholars certain criteria, such as geographical location, career purpose, first choice of college, sex, parents' occupation, and others, and may of course provide any desired number of scholarships.

Students selected choose their own colleges and courses of study, and the scholarship will be held for them if either military service

or serious illness interferes. Financial need is not involved in the selection process, giving recognition to the fact that sometimes factors other than limited finances keep youngsters from continuing their educations. The scholarship is for four years, or any part of that period during which scholarship-level work is maintained.

Many interesting items have turned up about the first students chosen. Their outside activities are extremely varied, including work as disc jockeys, paid correspondents for newspapers, and translators (one has translated into verse four books of Homer's *Iliad*). A number of them are engaged in advanced research projects. They include students who would have gone to college anyway but now have this honor in their records, and many who because of money, boredom, or lethargy would have been lost along the way.

Details of registration for the first qualifying test are given in a manual sent to all secondary schools by the Educational Testing Service, Box 589, Princeton, New Jersey. The headquarters of the Corporation is 1580 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, Illinois; its president is Dr. John M. Stalnaker, former dean of students at Stanford University.

In every crowd—and among all readers—there is always a kill-joy who isn't happy about something. Before he starts tearing apart this multimillion dollar plan which even in its infancy has done so much good, we ought to admit two things:

1. At the present rate each high school in the country has only one chance in 50 to snare one of the scholarships.
2. Only a relatively small proportion of students way up at the top can win these awards.

Yes, it's true that the selections are mighty limited and the benefits accrue to very few families, but this corporation constitutes a conspicuous beginning in which industry can increasingly participate. No one, including the persons directly involved, is satisfied with the limitations necessarily imposed, but all of us ought to derive quite a bit of satisfaction from this bright new development.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation talks and acts in terms of hundreds. Our needs are up in the hundreds of thousands. Let's keep our eyes sharply on the bigger goal, but at the same time not belittle the vigorous baby steps we are making toward it.

While the size of this plan puts it in the forefront of what industry is doing, it isn't the only contribution by any means. During the summer of 1957 the Carnegie Corporation granted the National Education Association \$55,000 for a national conference on the secondary education of academically talented students. James B. Conant, former President of Harvard University and more recently the United States ambassador to West Germany, is chairman of the conference, scheduled for February 6-8, 1958, in Washington, D.C. Coöperation given to Junior Achievement endeavors, the participation of labor organizations through research and outright grants, the indirect entry of business through fraternal organizations—all are in motion, but needing the help and direction of those especially alert to the national loss due to our neglect of gifted children.

### THE FORD FOUNDATION PROGRAM

A large, specialized, and very significant recent development is the \$25 million program of the Ford Foundation announced in April, 1957 to combat the shortage of college teachers. This is the largest allocation ever made in the United States to encourage well-qualified college students to continue their work through the doctorate level. Dr. Henry T. Heald, President of the Foundation, in releasing the details called attention to our expected doubling of college enrollments in the next 15 years and our need to recruit actively for more and the most gifted to teach these students.

Details of the Ford Foundation grant include these items:

The awards will be made at the rate of 1000 a year for the next five years through the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Program established in 1945 at Princeton.

Eleven million dollars will finance grants of \$2200 each to help students



get through their first year of graduate study. Another \$10 million will help students who are past their first graduate year. \$2,800,000 will be used for intensive recruiting through 100 faculty members on 1000 campuses. Administrative expenses will require most of the balance.

The awards will be in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics—recognizing the importance of the physical sciences but *also* other vital areas of learning.

It is felt that these awards will help meet the shortage that recent estimates state in this way: Only one Ph.D. being prepared for each five or six new college teachers needed; by 1970, the present 40 percent with Ph.D. training will fall to 20 percent or less.

Such actions as this one of the Ford Foundation are not intended as dead-end contributions; they are planned to stimulate other organizations into joining the fight to guide our gifted toward the high levels which they are able to reach.

### OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES

We're an organizing country, from the Tuesday-night bridge or poker club right up to political parties or churches joined by millions. It was inevitable that a group interested in gifted children should get together and choose a name like "The American Association for Gifted Children." It was set up in 1946 when interest in gifted children was at a low level.

The Association has among its objectives: To help find gifted youngsters; to help them use their abilities for their own satisfaction and the benefit of others, and at the same time to maintain status with their groups; to assist *all* children in worthwhile use of their constructive abilities by recognizing, appreciating, and stimulating creative work.

Part of the increased publicity and interest in this whole field is due to (1) the close coöperation of the Association with other professional organizations (e.g., the National Association for Mental Health, the United States Office of Education, the Educational Policies Commission, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of School Administra-

tors, and the International Council for Exceptional Children); and (2) the active participation of key figures in education, such as Ruth Strang, Paul Witty, and W. Carson Ryan.

A major contribution of the American Association for Gifted Children is its book called *The Gifted Child* edited by Paul Witty, and published by D. C. Heath in 1951. Bulletins and articles, speeches, seminars, courses for teachers, and research are among its many other activities. The headquarters are at 15 Gramercy Park, New York 3, New York.

January, 1957, brought the first issue of *The Gifted Child Newsletter*, a publication of the National Association for Gifted Children which is scheduled for quarterly release. Its subheading states: "For a brighter future tomorrow, identify the gifted child today." The organization lists the following objectives for itself: Provide articles and reprints; publish *The Newsletter*; give program assistance to all interested groups; plan national conventions; help subsidize programs at all levels; encourage research; sponsor an annual essay contest to stimulate interest; publish a *Journal*. The address of this national association is 409 Clinton Springs Avenue, Cincinnati 17, Ohio.

Numerous organizations do not have the study of the gifted as their major objective, and yet have been very helpful in pointing up the problem. Among the most important of these are the following.

1. The Educational Policies Commission, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. This Commission, which is part of the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators issued a booklet entitled *The Education of the Gifted* in 1950 which set the pace for many publications which followed from other sources. A more recent one, *Manpower and Education* (1956), stresses the threatening manpower shortage in the United States and the need for using our human resources to their maximum.
2. The International Council for Exceptional Children, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. Also a division of the National Education Association, this Council has created quite a stir among teachers and administrators, arousing their interest in and concern for all

- children who deviate from the so-called normal. Its monthly magazine, *Exceptional Children*, frequently includes articles on the gifted.
3. The American Psychological Association, 1333 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. It has established a division whose responsibility it is to study students with high potentialities.
  4. The National Vocational Guidance Association, 1534 O Street, N.W., Washington 5, D.C. Emphasis here is on guidance of the gifted along vocational lines.

A recent addition to this field perhaps is not as widely known as it undoubtedly will be within a relatively short time. It is the Talented Youth Project of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University, set up in 1954. The Project conducts studies in public schools related to the identification, instruction, and guidance of the gifted, as well as experimenting with program modifications and interpreting past and present research on gifted and talented children.

As one of the most stimulating new developments, the Talented Youth Project indicates clearly through its work how important a contribution it is making. Its research studies include the following:

- The effects of ability grouping on gifted and nongifted elementary school students. The New York City and Norfolk County, Virginia schools are cooperating.
- Attitudes toward self and toward school of intellectually gifted achievers and under-achievers and average ability over-achievers at the high school level. Evanston Township High School in Illinois is the cooperating school on this study.
- Underachievement among high ability entering tenth graders. Students of De Witt Clinton High School in New York are the subjects.
- Seminar for gifted rural school youth. Students brought together from several small high schools in Lewis County, New York are involved.
- The effects of a special guidance program on the development of gifted high school students. The Project went to North High School in Denver for this one.
- The effects of English Honors Classes on the achievement of gifted and nongifted students. The values of this subject matter emphasis are being pursued at Evanston Township High School, Illinois.
- The development of an instrument for use by secondary schools to ap-

praise their educational program for the talented. To provide criteria for measuring program quality, 200 secondary schools in large cities, suburbs, and rural areas are being used.

Experiments in acceleration and partial ability grouping in the elementary school. Effects of these approaches are being studied in two schools in Dade County, Florida.

Peer attitudes toward gifted high school students. How the peer groups feel about the gifted will be analyzed in urban, suburban, and rural high schools.

The Talented Youth Project's first publication, *Planning for Talented Youth*, offers promise of more to come as the research activities materialize and answer questions such as these: Why are some gifted children successful academically while some are not? Who should teach the gifted? What are the roles of parents of the gifted? What constitutes a good in-service training program for teachers? How can other youth-serving agencies in the community assist?

The places of elementary and secondary schools, rural and urban schools, parents, teachers, and administrators will all have the research spotlight turned on them through the efforts of this organization. Dr. A. Harry Passow of Teachers College, Columbia University is the name most frequently associated with this new project.

A somewhat specialized kind of talent hunt has been the focal point of another organization—the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students, 6 East 82nd Street, New York 28, New York. In ten years this independent agency has helped more than 4000 students enroll in 300 interracial colleges, providing one and a quarter million dollars in scholarship aid to supplement insufficient amounts already awarded, and also counselling and college advisory services on both graduate and undergraduate levels for additional thousands.

As a publication of this organization indicates, this program "is necessary because Negro Americans who compose over 10 percent of our population, compose only about 1 percent of our interracial college population. This means that a large segment of our



national manpower potential remains under-educated and under-skilled at a time when the nation cannot afford to be so wasteful." It is supported mainly by foundation grants, student funds from college and school campus chest drives, and a few individual friends; the Service was set up in 1947 by seven college presidents.

Its latest effort is a publication entitled *Blueprint for Talent Searching* by Richard L. Plaut, executive vice chairman of the organization, which will help communities tap their own reserves of potential trained manpower. One of its new objectives is to plan for earlier (junior high school) identification of students with ability so that they may receive intensive counselling through the high school years before low educational objectives and limited finances put an end to their schooling.

This program which was once called the "Southern Project," and based on a grant from the Fund for the Advancement of Education of the Ford Foundation, now has national implications in putting the focus on a group of whose giftedness we have been even more negligent—if that's possible—than of our population as a whole.

From the mass of local organizations springing up all over the country whose goal is calling attention to and doing something about the gifted child, let us filter out one as representative. The Arizona Association for Gifted Children is a good example of a group whose beginning was spontaneous because of just plain worry about the subject. Its founders were all members of the "Workshop on the Education of Exceptional Children" at Arizona State College during the summer of 1956 and felt that the five weeks were merely a tantalizer on a subject of intense interest to them.

On the basis of an organizational meeting its purposes were stated simply:

To promote interest in the gifted child by Arizona schools, school personnel, and parents.

To study, prepare, and exchange factual information concerning the education of the gifted.

A fall, 1956 meeting with a speaker emphasizing industry's needs for the gifted and which attracted more than 200 teachers,



administrators, and parents; and Volume I, Number 1 of a dittoed news bulletin entitled *Potential* are forerunners of the kinds of activities that an enthusiastic local organization can sponsor.

The nine organizations mentioned above symbolize a growing interest in gifted children. They are just a few of the many active ones in all states and most cities, but enough to indicate that expansion is on the way. And yet, why shouldn't it be? We organize around the themes of barber shop quartets, marching bands, and ping-pong tournaments, worthy causes one and all. Maybe we are beginning to think our children are *just* as worthy.

### ON A BROADER SCALE—THE STATES

The whole field of exceptional children in its broadest sense, including all youngsters who deviate from the so-called normal, has attracted the interest and action of all the states. *That's* very good! Few of the states seem to have more than a nodding acquaintance with the one category of exceptional children that we have singled out for special consideration in this book. *That's* very bad!

Despite all the articles and talk of recent months on this subject here is how the picture looks:

In no state department of education is there a full-time person in the area of gifted children, although many do have full-time persons who cover all exceptional children and are aware of and active in this field as well as the others. (The state of Washington will probably be the first according to current planning.)

In only one state (Pennsylvania) is there a special certificate for teachers of the gifted, although 32 states and the District of Columbia have some special certification for teachers of exceptional children, including 30 on speech handicaps, 27 on hard-of-hearing, and 22 in mental retardation.

No state makes higher education economically attainable to all its youth who are qualified to pursue it. No state has removed all financial barriers to the higher education of all its most gifted youth.

The reasons for not having more widespread certification requirements for teachers of gifted children are fairly obvious: There are relatively few classes set aside for the bright ones, and there seems to be a lack of agreement on what distinctive competencies these teachers need.

The reason why other action has not been taken by states (and local school districts, too) was stated in this way recently by a school administrator:

Parents of mentally retarded, speech handicapped, deaf, and blind youngsters fill the outer office, and holler loud and long until someone hears them. They have a big problem, they need help, so they go out and get it. But not the parents of gifted children. Oh, a few of them do—but the yelling is still at the whisper stage, and no one gets any action *that way*!

But all is not lost, for the figures that follow indicate that with this start maybe the bright child will be considered just as important as other children one of these days. Some of the encouraging trends on the state level, as they apply to *other* groups of exceptional children are tabulated on p. 159.

It should be added quickly that the attention paid to other areas of exceptional children is not begrudged; it is terribly important to parents; the entire community; and, needless to say, the whole country entering an era of manpower shortages. But the emphasis needs broadening to include this one additional, significant group.

Many states have participated in providing financial aid on the level of higher education. Without mentioning the gifted, they have made provisions which inevitably favor that group. For example:

*New York*—In 1955 more than 4 percent of its high school graduates received scholarship help, most of them through the regents' college scholarship program. One of the unique characteristics of this state's plan is that most high school seniors can compete for scholarships valid in any public or private institution of higher education in the state.

*Florida*—An annual legislative appropriation of \$420,000 for the two years of 1955 to 1957 has been made to provide scholarship loans

GROWTH OF STATE LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE  
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Provisions in Legislative Acts	Number of States		
	June 1949	June 1952	Decem- ber 1955
Some type of special education has been authorized, with or without financial assistance.	42	46	48
Reimbursement from state funds has been authorized for 1 or more types of program.	34	44	46
Comprehensive legislation has been passed that refers to <i>both</i> physically and mentally handicapped children and provides state aid for programs for both.	22	31	44
Reimbursement has been provided to local districts for programs serving mentally retarded children.	21	32	43
Special education and state assistance have been extended to programs for severely mentally retarded children.	5	9	19
Special education and state assistance have been extended to programs for maladjusted and delinquent children.	4	8	14

for students preparing to enter the severe shortage area of teaching, such loans to be cancelled by teaching service for the state.

*Louisiana*—The legislature appropriated \$359,400 for 1955-56 scholarships in state-supported institutions.

*Maryland*—In 1955-56, \$532,750 was provided for basically private institutions which in turn were to award scholarships according to the state's legal provisions.

*Mississippi*—For medical and nursing education alone, \$500,000 was allocated in 1955-56.

At least 21 states have state financed scholarships or other financial aid for those preparing to teach, and many make specific provisions for study in medicine, dentistry, and nursing. But no state scholarship programs exist in the following: Arizona, Arkansas, Cali-

fornia, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Nevada, Texas.

An excellent example of state leadership on problems of the gifted is demonstrated by the State Department of Education in Connecticut. They felt they *had* to be among the pioneers in state action, for while others estimate 1 percent of their children are superior in intelligence and/or talent, Connecticut's estimate is *15 percent!* To date the activities in which the Connecticut State Department of Education are involved directly or indirectly include the following:

1. *The Connecticut Committee for the Gifted.* This Committee, consisting of professional educators and laymen under the chairmanship of author John Hersey, has as its objectives the identification of good programs, dissemination of information, stimulation of interest, setting up workshops for teachers, and surveying the needs in rural areas. An important part of its work has been conducted by Mrs. Helen Erskine Roberts who was brought in to survey thoroughly the practices related to the gifted in Connecticut schools. The Committee is interested in encouraging experiments in music, art, literature, and science; exchanging experiences among groups in the state; putting emphasis on all age levels; public and private schools; and colleges and universities; and bringing parents and all other community resources in as key segments of the whole plan.

2. *Participation in the Eight State Committee.* Connecticut in coöperation with seven other northeastern states (New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine) has prepared a booklet on the subject, entitled *Education for Gifted Children and Youth*. The importance of the problem and the earnestness of the publication are indicated by this statement in the foreword:

Surely there is no problem of greater far-reaching implication for the strength and welfare of the nation than the appropriate and maximum use of the manpower resources. Excellence, creativity, inventive powers, superior competence; indeed the special intellectual and personal talents of all should be developed to the maximum as a matter of sound state and national policy.

Going on from there, the publication attempts to sensitize the teacher and administrator to the child with unusual potentialities, outline ways in which the gifted may be identified, suggest appropriate types of programs and school activities, and indicate the role of various groups and resources within the educational and community structure.

3. *Participation in Metropolitan Regional Study.* The metropolitan area of New York City, Long Island, and southwestern Connecticut has released a pamphlet resulting from a detailed investigation of their local problems. *How to Educate the Gifted Child* by the Metropolitan School Study Council contains specific practices that have been tried successfully. The usual warning note must be inserted that just because these practices worked for someone else does *not* mean they will succeed for you; they are, however, certainly worth consideration and perhaps adaptation.

4. *State Department Publications.* A mimeographed release from the Connecticut State Department of Education entitled *Education of Superior Children* tosses out a challenge on the subject ("The schools cannot afford to ignore or to waste human resources which need to be recognized, developed, and used. . ."). It includes a brief historical statement; summaries on enrichment practices, acceleration, segregation, and identification; quotations about the gifted; and a suggested minimum basic kit of reference materials. But the most vital page of all is devoted to "A Statement of Policy," one which could aptly be set up as a basic philosophy for other states, local boards of education, and individual schools.

In part, this statement calls attention to the need for providing for boys and girls who demonstrate potential superiority in areas like "leadership . . . creative expression . . . planning and organization of ideas, things and people . . . scientific organization and experimentation . . . understanding and use of mathematic concepts at very high levels . . . sensitivity and concern for human problems . . . contribution to mankind's thought and knowledge . . . appreciation of superior products and activities of others." It goes on to say that "there is no one or easy way to accomplish this



task. There are many ways. Each community must develop for itself its own program."

In this statement of policy the Department accepts responsibility for stimulating interest in the program, providing resource assistance for in-service training, and furnishing other aids.

The state has put special emphasis on the high school level through various materials, including a pamphlet compiled by Robert W. Stoughton of the State Department (*Current Practices in Connecticut Secondary Schools—Provisions for the Gifted*).

5. *Other Activities of the State Department of Education.* This busy department also works closely with (1) the personnel in special courses for teachers of the gifted (as at New Haven State Teachers College and the University of Connecticut); (2) the plan for college credit at the University for advanced work in high schools; (3) statewide conferences and workshops; and (4) school and PTA study groups. It intends to prepare a film strip for school orientation and has other publications in the planning stages. The scope of its work is broadened through studies and experimental programs in the schools of West Hartford, New Haven, Darien, Stratford, Norwalk, and many other communities.

A letter in March, 1957 from Mr. Stoughton stated:

We have not published any additional materials on the gifted during the past few months. This is primarily a year of developments in school with many schools making studies and/or embarking on program development. At the secondary school-college level a significant step is the appointment of a staff member at the University of Connecticut to coordinate the college level courses in high school, between the University and several high schools in the state. For a description of this program you should contact Mr. Alexander Plante, School of Education, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut.

A rather interesting and stimulating local community study of providing for the gifted was carried out in Darien. I'm not sure whether reports of this committee work are available for distribution but you may wish to inquire of Mr. Francis McKenzie, Director of Guidance, Darien Junior High School, Darien, Connecticut.

We anticipate that the report of the survey of programs in Connecticut which was made by Mrs. Helen Roberts last year will be available sometime this spring.

It almost sounds as though the Connecticut State Department of Education has all its eggs in the basket of the gifted, but that is not so. This is only one phase of its program, but the fact cannot be avoided that these people apparently are eager to set up a priority based on importance and so the gifted are given some real recognition. A few other state departments are equally alert; however, the rest might at least take the hint from the leaders.

### ON A BROADER SCALE—NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

If a problem is of concern to enough families, the state finds out about it. If enough states get on the bandwagon, the national government is involved. So it has been with one of the basic ideas under discussion for many years related to gifted young people.

A congressman (Carl Elliott of Alabama), a former senator (William Benton of Connecticut), an educator (President James R. Killian, Jr. of Massachusetts Institute of Technology), and a Nobel Prize winning chemist (Dr. Glenn Seaborg) are among many who have suggested a broad federal system of scholarships for gifted students. They have been supported by the President's Commission on Higher Education; the President's Scientific Research Board; the Hoover Commission's Task Force on Public Welfare; a statement from the U.S. Office of Education (which pointed out the reservoir of gifted who never get to college and the fact that a majority come from nonprofessional classes and families of modest income); and professional organizations such as the Department of Higher Education of the National Education Association, the National Students' Association, and the American Council on Education.

Dr. Seaborg presented this point of view by saying: "We need to establish the principle that it is in the national interest that every student above a certain level of ability, regardless of his origin and

the status of his family's finances, be privileged to carry his education as far as his personal motivation and his scholastic ability will carry him."<sup>1</sup>

These suggestions obviously open up the whole subject of federal aid to education, with all the arguments for and against which have been raging in Congress and elsewhere for many years. Perhaps we had better look at them, at least in capsule form, before moving on; they have been admirably summarized by Charles A. Quattlebaum, Specialist in Education, in a report prepared in 1956 by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress as follows:

FOR:

1. We have a reservoir of potential first-class college graduates in those youth of outstanding ability who do not attend college or do not finish their college courses.
2. A major reason for the failure of competent youth to graduate from college is lack of money.
3. Our national welfare depends upon the education of our competent youth.
4. The United States' need is particularly great for more college-trained scientists and engineers. Shortages of graduates in these fields threaten our national survival, as is shown by comparison of United States and Soviet production of scientists and engineers.
5. The federal government should remove the financial barriers to the higher education of the nation's competent youth.
  - a. The national interest demands it.
  - b. There is ample precedent for it.
  - c. Existing scholarship aid and loan funds are inadequate.
  - d. It would not involve controversies with respect to racial segregation and aid to private institutions.
  - e. It would not lead toward federal control of education.
  - f. It would more nearly equalize educational opportunity for many of our youth.
  - g. The federal government is the only agency in a position to finance a national program of this kind.
  - h. We are not going to get the level of higher education we need, evaluated in a qualitative sense, unless we have a national program.

<sup>1</sup> Associated Press dispatch, December 28, 1956.

## AGAINST:

1. The national shortages of college graduates in many fields are temporary. The problem is more an educational than a demographic problem, the latter being the direct result of the low birthrate in the 1930's.
2. There are alternative solutions which could be developed to relieve the current manpower shortage. In the meantime, much needed research could be undertaken to give the nation a clearer picture of the exact shortages and of the existing scholarship and loan programs.
3. Federal aid to students for higher education would be discriminatory because it would educate a few at the expense of many. Federal aid would destroy the ambition of conscientious students who would be willing to work their way through college. There are plenty of part-time job opportunities for superior students.
4. Lack of money is not the only reason for failing to enter college. There are other reasons why many students do not attend college.
5. If a national scholarship program should be established, many of the scholarships would undoubtedly fall to students who would have attended college without such assistance. A program of this kind would not be practicable politically.
6. If further governmental aid to students for higher education is needed, it should be financed and administered by the States rather than by the federal government.
7. Although the federal government is already operating large and varied programs giving aid to students for higher education, such programs do not necessarily constitute a precedent for general aid to students in colleges.
8. Some measure of federal control over education would inevitably accompany a general program of federal aid to students.

Turning the clock back we see many instances when the national government stepped into the education picture to operate education programs of its own or aid states and territories—generally helping gifted students on an indirect basis only. There is nothing startling or radical about the procedure:

- 1785: Lot #16 in every township for support of schools within that township.
- 1787: Northwest Ordinance: education as part of a national responsibility.
- 1802: West Point established.



- 1845: Naval Academy established.
- 1862: Morrill Act; land grant colleges.
- 1867: U.S. Office of Education established.
- 1874: Nautical schools set up at six ports.
- 1887: Agricultural experimental stations under Congressional appropriation.
- 1906: Participation in higher education activities of Pan-American Union.
- 1916: Army Reserve Officer Training Corps.
- 1917: Smith-Hughes Act; vocational education.
- 1920: Vocational Rehabilitation Act.
- 1930's: Emergency relief programs affecting higher education.
- 1936: U.S. Maritime Commission: officer training.
- 1940's: Emergency war programs and aids to education.
- 1941: College housing under the Lanham Act.
- 1944: Surplus Property Act, some going to education.
- 1944: Public Health Service Act: research fellowships in public health.
- 1946: Fulbright Act for teaching and research abroad.
- 1946: Participation in UNESCO.
- 1946: George-Barden Act; vocational education.
- 1948: Smith-Mundt Act: educational exchanges.
- 1950: Housing Act, with college housing amendments of 1955.
- 1954: Air Force Academy set up.

Recent and current developments also show what a live issue this is, and how many people are concerned about the place of the federal government in education in general and especially in the education of our gifted youth. Here are a few indications:

Exemption from income taxes of nonprofit institutions of higher learning. Various proposals for federal aid to students in higher education in every session of Congress since 1950; more than 50 House and Senate bills in just the 1st session of the 84th Congress. (It almost seems fashionable to introduce the bills—and *just* as fashionable to vote them down!)

Recommendations in this area from several state conferences (Arizona, Illinois, Montana, Oregon) preceding the White House Conference on Education in 1955, despite its not being on the agenda.

President Eisenhower's statement, as reported in the New York Times on November 11, 1954, that in order to compete with the Soviet Union's output of scientists, our federal government could and possibly would have to establish scholarships.



Appointment of the President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School, and the related state committees, investigating this problem. This is one of the most promising developments—based on committees of professional educators and laymen. (The July, 1957, report to the President of this national committee has numerous recommendations related to gifted children.)

Establishment of the National Committee for the Development of Scientists and Engineers.

Activities of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; articles on proposals for federal aid to selected college students in their publications *School Life* and *Higher Education*.

Hearings by a subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy regarding the shortages of scientific and engineering personnel; publication by the Joint Committee regarding manpower in these fields.

Based on our need (which is tremendous) and on the current status of our country (at the highest achievement level in its history), what we are accomplishing on a nation-wide basis related to gifted children may seem too limited. But first we have to see the facts clearly. What *are* the specific activities currently achieved through federal means that contribute in some way to the welfare of our bright youngsters and adults? The list is surprisingly long and impressive:

Aid to Land Grant Colleges—Morrill Act.

Atomic Energy Commission—fellowships in radiological physics, industrial hygiene, and industrial medicine; off-site research program consisting of graduate work in colleges and universities with research contracts.

Department of Commerce—Merchant Marine Academy; cadets at state marine schools.

Department of Interior—aid to Indian students.

Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force—academies; reserve of officers' training programs.

Federal-state vocational education program—Smith-Hughes and George-Barden acts.

International Coöperation Administration—training, study, and observation in the United States by selected officials of foreign countries to enable them better to perform duties related to economic development projects.

International Educational Exchange Program (U.S. Department of State)—Inter-American exchanges; Fulbright Act; Smith-Mundt Act. National Institutes of Health (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare)—research fellowships and other graduate work in areas of arthritis, metabolic diseases, cancer, heart, mental health, neurological diseases, and blindness.

National Science Foundation—fellowships in mathematical, physical, biological, engineering, and other sciences; research grants.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation—traineeships and fellowships.

Research contracts with institutions of higher learning—defense; agriculture.

Special schools—Howard University (Negroes); Gallaudet College (deaf).

Treasury Department—Coast Guard Academy.

Veterans Administration—educational programs for veterans of World War II and Korean conflict; vocational rehabilitation.

Before we build up within ourselves a glow of pride in how good we are, we ought to see these items in their proper perspective: (1) None of the existing programs offers scholarships for which all high school graduates are eligible to compete with free choice of institution and course of study; (2) the existing programs make available some federal aid to only a very small percentage of the nation's high school graduates each year; (3) none of the existing programs operates on a principle of allocation of federal funds to states for general scholarships to be awarded in accordance with prescribed terms; *and* (4) not one has for its basic aim the removal of financial barriers for the nation's most gifted and/or most needy youth.

In our final chapter we will project ourselves into the future, looking at what can and should be done. Much of the material included here on our national approach will be basic to an understanding and acceptance of the suggestions coming up later.

Just as on the state level, the federal government has shown in a practical dollars-and-cents manner how important it feels the whole field of exceptional children is. Two recent allocations by Congress put \$2 million into the Children's Bureau and the U.S.

Office of Education for research and other projects on mentally retarded children.

Indications are that additional allocations of this kind are in the offing, possibly expanding into other of the handicap categories of special education. Who knows, maybe even the gifted will be included some day. The current is encouragingly in the right direction.

### WE ARE NOT ALONE

So wrote James Hilton as the title of a novel some years ago. No one these days need feel lonely in his concern for the neglected bright child . . .

Not with all the talking, reading, and writing by parents, teachers, school administrators, scientists, and Congressmen . . .

Not with the thinking and doing of neighborhoods, communities, rural areas, states, and the national government . . .

Not with increasing amounts of time and money devoted to the subject by men and women who know that money talks and that pioneers in worthwhile endeavors are followed.

We tend to be so impatient with what looks like a snail's pace of progress. That's probably a good thing, for it is the impatience and nervous tension in some persons which may catalyze others into motion.









The teacher opens new worlds to eager young minds . . . worlds of adventure and science . . . and the gifted child and adolescent realize much later that there was a man or woman who once provided the magic key.

*Left, Photography Dept., Arizona State College, Tempe; below, Edward Gurr*



# VII

## *The Teacher of Gifted Children*

A WISE man many years ago said: "If I seem to see farther than others, it is only because I stand on the shoulders of giants." In that statement is succinctly put the core of this problem. We may talk about big plans on a national basis. We may point out what states are doing—and not doing. We may give parents credit for all they are accomplishing and take them to task for their deficiencies.

But when we get down to cases, when we discuss *this* boy or girl who is slouching along intellectually, then we suddenly realize that as important as are all our other points of emphasis, one stands out above the rest. And we can be certain that no matter how much automation, educational TV, and harnessing of hydrogen energy we develop, the intimate relationship and learning environment created by a child and his teacher are still the center of the issue. Isaac Newton paid tribute to that basic idea in the quotation above, and others support him in fact and fiction when they write about the greatness of teachers they have known.

Unfortunately, the strains of tender music do not accompany *all* of our thoughts about teachers. The other side of the ledger is balanced by statements like this one which appeared in a magazine sometime ago, written by a man named John Reed:

We take young soaring imaginations, consumed with curiosity about the life they see all around, and feed them with dead technique. . . .

And the teachers! Men and women . . . whose chief qualification is that they can plough steadily through a dull round of dates, acts, half-truths and rules for style, without questioning, without interpreting and without seeing how ridiculously unlike the world their teachings are. I have forgotten most of it, forced on me before I was ready; what I do know came mostly from books I had the curiosity to read outside school hours. And many fine things I have had to force myself to explore again, because school once spoiled them for me.

Whether a youngster works to his capacity, develops new and expanding interests, becomes excited about a world speeding at the fastest clip it has ever attained, or analyzes himself as a potential force in a society desperately in need of him might be determined by one person—one teacher who may cross his path only temporarily. But that may be a person he likes and admires, one who somehow is able to see the universe through his eyes, and who has the sensitivity and intuition possessed by all good teachers.

If he has met one like that, he is fortunate, for many of us have muddled along without ever having encountered the bright light of wisdom that an enthusiastic teacher can impart. If we ask the luckier ones, we find that while most of the time the contact was in a classroom, sometimes the adult capable of kindling the spark was nowhere near a school building. Too often we forget the multitude of chinks and crevices where learning and insightful understanding lie in wait.

The persons listed below may bring a memory through a haze created by the years between, a figure that had faded out of our consciousness. Haven't these been teachers too? Haven't they woven stories and dreams, developed hopes and ambitions, brought vivid pictures of faraway places? Write your own names if you want to, for these are just a few who might have shown you that knowledge doesn't come in neat packages or clear-cut compartments, or develop only at prearranged times and places:

The neighbor lady who read books, talked to us, and listened to our ideas.

The business man who lived down the street, had not even completed elementary school, but who studied a great deal on his own each

evening in fields unrelated to his work, and gave us plenty to think about.

The philosophers who sold newspapers at a stand on the corner, cut hair, delivered milk, carried huge chunks of ice, or filled the car with gas.

The mother and father who, though so tired after a day's work, answered questions and wondered with us about the unanswered ones.

These and others we have known occupy an important place among the teachers to whom we have been exposed. Truth was no less truthful and a fact was no less a fact just because they were spoken ungrammatically, in a foreign accent, or in the fresh air of an open field rather than in the musty cloisters of chalk dust and ink wells.

Recognizing the ubiquitous quality of teaching and wisdom makes the classroom teacher no less vital in the learning process. For here, in one individual, there is preparation, a professional approach, organization, a knowledge of children, and a desire to teach them. While education has a broad base, it reaches its pinnacle of accomplishment when boy and teacher come together in a mutually developed plan where continuity, respect, and accomplishment have a place.

For all children—the gifted and all the rest—that goal is the objective of every teacher who finds pride in the task upon which our future is based.

### TEACHER ATTITUDES

Teachers are individuals, with the same fears, insecurities, aims, desires, and plans as others have. Even though more closely related to gifted children, they share all of the ideas about them possessed by the society as a whole, for they are a part of that society. Their preparation should have brought full enlightenment about gifted children as a group, but some of them failed to get it, a factor which makes them about the same as a doctor, dentist, or engineer who has to "fill in" as he goes along.

We can be sure that most teachers recognize the *facts* of individual differences, of the need for adapting a program to satisfy those differences, and of a variety of materials and techniques to help do the job. But no agreement evolves when we ask, "How?" for a cleavage in "best" methods may come even between close friends who share not only their teacher preparation program but also the socioeconomic background from which they came. Enrichment versus acceleration, homogeneous versus heterogeneous grouping, seatwork and workbooks (pro and con), how to identify gifted children (and whether they *can* be fully identified!)—each side has its supporters, and each question also has the teachers who can't make up their minds because "frankly, I hadn't even thought about the problem."

We enter a dangerous twilight zone when we generalize about the ideas or attitudes of any group, and the danger is compounded when the group involved is as vocal as our teachers are. But we can't go wrong if we quote the ideas of one, and the consensus of many; others, of course, retain the right to differ.

A mature member of a graduate college class made these pointed observations in summarizing her attitudes on the subject:

I have known gifted children turned sour by insultingly simple assignments. Why should they want to read when the only books available to them present no challenging ideas or facts? Why should they want to learn more about a world in which the teachers seem so positive but so inaccurate as to make exchange of ideas impossible? Let no teacher who is "wise in her own conceit" be allowed in this field. We should admit only those who marvel at the continual unfolding of truth.

And there are other teachers with other ideas; about large classes that obliterate the individual; about administrators who close the door on administrative and teacher experimentation with gifted children; about parents who smother creativity and parents who nag, pressure, and overwork capable children; and about teachers who crawl along in a dreary, monotonous groove. If they also turn their critical eye inward toward introspective betterment, *then* we are really getting somewhere!



Not long ago a group of teachers at the University of North Carolina tried that and came up with some interesting conclusions. You may disagree with their points of view, but their candor and thoughtfulness deserve credit. Here's how their "creed" went:

1. We believe that there are many gifted children in our area.
2. We believe that gifted children will grow when an enriched program is provided for them within their regular classrooms and with their classmates.
3. We believe that all children will grow when gifted children share their experience.
4. We believe that the gifted child needs affection, understanding, acceptance, security, and the opportunity for creative expression.
5. We believe that the gifted child should be identified early in his life.
6. We believe that classroom teachers should be alert to the many worthwhile channels through which all children, especially gifted children, can experience self-expression.
7. We believe that teachers should be encouraged to conduct sound experiments with all children, especially the gifted.
8. We believe that when special aptitudes of gifted children are recognized, provision should be made for their continued growth and development in order to benefit society.
9. We believe that gifted children enjoy *functional* drill as do other children.
10. We believe that the home, the school, the church, and the community must work together so that provision will be made for the gifted child's fullest growth.
11. We believe that our creed is a workable philosophy when (a) there are relatively small classes; (b) groupings are based upon friendship and special interest and abilities; (c) there is a variety of materials; (d) there is a library with a large number and wide selection of books; (e) there is fine rapport between the pupils and the teachers; (f) the work is planned in large units—a good method for gifted children because of their longer interest span.

The definiteness of their beliefs and suggestions is representative of the seriousness with which most teachers approach the subject these days. Recognizing its importance and frustrated by the variety of solutions, many seek answers in their own ability to cope with the gifted child and his needs.

## SHOULD THE TEACHER BE GIFTED TOO?

Books, articles, salary scales, and merit systems which attempt to define a "good" teacher miss the mark by a long way. Legitimate questions to ask are: "Good for whom?" and "Good in what way?" Long, impressive (and questionable) lists have been compiled of the qualities of personality, preparation, and background which are recommended or essential for teachers.

Have you ever seen these lists? They pertain to *all* teachers, those who teach groups mixed on the basis of talent and intellect, and others more homogeneously screened. They contain sweet sounding words which, if taken at face value, would knock out the few props which still remain under our teacher recruitment possibilities. Which paragon of all that's wonderful could measure up, and who would be presumptuous enough to say that he is qualified to be a teacher in the face of these all-inclusive check lists?

Many who have thought, written, or talked about teachers of gifted children fall into the same error, one they may fail to recognize. The standards they set up are for the kind of perfection to which normal human beings don't aspire.

It was fun to go through the literature on the education of gifted children and accumulate the words and phrases that some feel are necessary in evaluating newcomers and old-timers interested in teaching the gifted. Here are just a few as they are actually presented; keep in mind the accompanying dare—to find persons who possess them!

## AS A PERSON:

Versatility of interests.

Natural independence of thought.

Broad range of skills and accomplishments.

Good health; physical superiority; athletic activity.

Broad fund of general information and cultural background.

Kindliness and consideration for others.

Creativeness; inventiveness; originality.

Psychological maturity; emotional stability.

Participating member of the community.

Skill in human relationships.

Wide background of vocational and avocational experiences.

Pleasant voice, manner, and personal appearance.

Superior intelligence.

Love of truth for its own sake.

A sound, level-headed philosophy of life.

Ability to stimulate and inspire.

Freedom from excessive sensitivity to criticism.

Capacity for self-criticism.

Understanding of current and other societies.

Respect for the supreme importance of the individual personality.

And—words such as these:

Fairness

Tolerance

Modesty

Personality

Good will

Alertness

Intuition

Resourcefulness

Friendliness

Understanding

Consideration

Impartiality

Versatility

Patience

Sense of humor

Common sense

Democratic attitude

Down-to-earth quality

Curiosity

Imagination

Flexibility

Constructiveness

Thoughtfulness

Positiveness

Decisiveness

Vigor

#### AS A TEACHER:

Understanding and acceptance of children.

Interest in children's problems.

Unusual proficiency in teaching a subject or subjects.

Ability to use recognition and praise—and criticism.

Capacity for allowing others to assume responsibility.

Liked and respected by children.

Capable of working well with parents and school personnel.

Clear and consistent philosophy of education and professional ideals.

Respect for, rather than fearful of and threatened by, the gifted child.

Broad experience in teaching children.

Knowledge of child development—intellectual, emotional, social, physical.

Ability to accept nonconformity of attitudes and behavior; respect for new ideas.

- Knowledge of guidance and counseling techniques—individual and group.
- Ability to open new vistas and expand horizons of children.
- Excellent lecturer, discussion leader, and group participant.
- Setting a good example, so that more of the gifted go into teaching.
- Writing for and using materials of professional publications.
- Background as an officer in a teacher organization.
- Use of discipline based on preventiveness, consistency, and appropriateness.
- Participation in preparation of courses of study or other teacher-prepared materials; knowledge of principles of curriculum design.
- Ability to provide an atmosphere for intellectual freedom and for development of individuality.
- Knowledge of theories of learning and other principles of educational psychology.
- Ability to recognize giftedness and potentialities.
- Encouragement of a well-balanced program for the gifted child—physical and mental, group and individual.
- Dissatisfaction with own teaching ability and knowledge.
- Respect for basic skills related to reading, listening, and observing.
- Willingness to exchange with other teachers successful techniques for working with gifted children.
- Help for parents not aware of expectations from and experiences for the gifted.
- Intention of making teaching one's career.
- Ability to teach individuals, small groups, large classes.
- Understanding of needs of the average and below-average as well as the gifted.
- Personal academic accomplishment (level of it depends entirely on the person making up the list, varying from a pre-Bachelor's to a post-Doctoral level).
- Encouragement of high standards of achievement and competition with one's self.
- Adaptation of techniques and materials to individual needs.
- Techniques of locating new sources of information, gathering and recording facts, and using community resources.
- Encouragement of originality, independence, initiative, critical and creative thinking, and sound generalizations.
- Help child understand his own abilities, talents, and limitations—and also those of others.
- Provision of opportunities for leadership and "followership."

Able demonstrator and experimenter.

Love for and faith in children.

A few other words and phrases rapidly come to mind as one skims over such lists—words like “gobbledygook” and “impossible!” If it weren’t so serious the humorous part of the whole thing is that such accumulations are so unsmilingly presented, as though it really is possible to find people with all of the qualifications listed. Administrators these days are sometimes glad they can find *people!*

On the other hand, for too long a time we have assumed that anybody can teach, and too often the thought has never occurred to us that gifted children need anything special in their teachers. Their teaching need can be stated very simply: Whether they are in special or mixed classes, *they need the best*. How “the best” is defined can, of course, differ from person to person, but no word-heavy, meaningless list is necessary. George Herbert Palmer some years ago referred to the successful teacher as having just four attributes:

1. Aptitude for vicariousness
2. Already accumulated wealth
3. Ability to invigorate life through knowledge
4. Readiness to be forgotten

From the point of view of children four objectives represented good teaching as stated by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association:

1. Self-realization
2. Human relationship
3. Economic efficiency
4. Civic responsibility

Some of the recent writers in the field raise questions rather than provide answers, a frustrating procedure at best. But at least they make one think a little. Dr. A. Harry Passow and his coworkers at Columbia University say we have to do some studying to answer questions like these:



What kinds of training and experience best qualify an individual to teach talented students?

To what extent do the following characteristics seem important in determining who should teach the talented?

High intelligence

Special aptitudes

Deep knowledge of own field

Broad knowledge of related fields

Productivity in a creative area

Sensitivity to creative expression of students

Flexibility of standards

Acceptance of different and original ideas

Warmth and friendliness toward students

A whole flock of doctoral dissertations abound in queries of that kind. Perhaps they also do in the self-examination questions listed by Robert F. DeHaan and Jack Kough in their book, *Helping Children with Special Needs*:

Are you interested in gifted children?

Are you concerned about their educational plight?

Can you understand their problems and can you get their points of view on things?

Do you like to ask stimulating questions of them to make them think or do you prefer to use the review questions at the end of the chapter?

Is it all right with you if you find children who can sometimes think faster than you or who can sometimes figure out a better way of doing a given job?

The simplicity and brevity of a few questions like these may make them all the more effective in separating teachers the gifted deserve from the ones *no* child should have.

One of our biggest difficulties is that teachers (and also the society in which they live) toss around promiscuously professional terms which should have real meaning and understanding for them. Guilty of the same dishonest "expertness" as the college freshman who becomes an authority on human behavior after one semester of "Introduction to Psychology" is the teacher who mouths the concepts of individual differences, child growth and development, and adaptation of a program to varying needs. Limitations we face

in providing for differences, in in-service facilities, and in college preparation are three factors that restrict many teachers of all the children. And until the standards lift in every direction, the gifted child will inevitably remain the forgotten one. It simply becomes a matter of realizing that a teacher who doesn't understand or who resents or feels threatened by the bright boy or girl cannot possibly create a sound environment for learning. He just is not capable of doing it.

A profession demands respect not by pleading for it but by setting its sights and standards on a level where this most important occupation of all should have them—way up high! The fearful ones who say, "But then we won't have enough teachers," have had a hold on restricting this field too long, for esteem, entrance requirements, and price tags all go hand in hand. And whether they inch or leap upward, our gifted youngsters will profit; then they will have more teachers who recognize that even younger persons can be brighter than they are and that their own maturity, knowledge, reverence for learning, and appreciation of the opportunity to teach these children will all pay dividends, daily and in the long run.

No matter how gifted our teachers are (and let no one lead you off the deep end on *that* one; plenty of them are far more than moderately intelligent by any social, conversational, interest, activity, or intellectual standard you want to use), they are sometimes limited in their ability to identify the gifted as well as in their accomplishments with them, based on both human failings and testing imperfections. Being overworked, they cannot help but occasionally miss singling one out for special attention, even though completely aware of and competent in the currently used techniques of child study.

Terman and Witty have both been critical of teachers' judgments in choosing the gifted. Achievement might be used as a basis—but the gifted child frequently does not work up to his capacity. The most accomplished may be selected—but he may be the oldest and, of course, might do better than younger (and brighter) children. The agreeable, shy child may be chosen—but it might be the in-

quisitive one who really is the more gifted and may become a threat to the teacher. Grades may be used—but often they do not correlate with standardized achievement tests.

Having the qualities of giftedness themselves and the ability to identify giftedness in their children should be supplemented by assistance available from many other directions. Here are a few examples:

1. *Help from specialists:* No teacher can be expected to be an expert in every field. Since we should seek the best for gifted children, experts are necessary to round out the program of even the most competent teachers. From which directions help should come will depend on the areas not already sufficiently covered. Help obviously might arrive from both within the school and out in the community. The fields of science, foreign languages, art, and music come to mind most quickly, and so do the work of the counselor, librarian, museum director, and various industrialists or business men in the community. Generally the most qualified teacher recognizes his limitations and eagerly seeks aid in expanding his offerings and coverage. It is the teacher who is seemingly self-sufficient about whom we should be concerned.
2. *Help from administrators:* Assistance from outside specialists will most frequently become available through the efforts of an alert administrator, as will aid in limiting size of classes and in restricting the extra duties so often piled on teachers. Many teachers do find time for each of their children, but the task becomes more manageable when there is understanding and backing from an administrator who recognizes and relieves, to the best of his ability, the manifold duties accepted by a good teacher. Encouragement, extra resources and materials, and a buffer between the public and classroom experimentation are some of the aids provided by the wise principal and superintendent.
3. *Help from the literature:* Expanding (although frequently repetitive) books and articles on the gifted, city and state

courses of study, and textbooks and teacher guides in specific subject areas are all fertile sources for the teacher who wants to do a better job with bright children. Dozens of pages could be filled with titles that any good public or college library will have on file. Following is a small sample:

The book by DeHaan and Kough, *Helping Children with Special Needs*, which was referred to earlier; it is published by Science Research Associates, Chicago (1956). Volume II contains sections especially aimed at helping teachers of intellectually gifted children, children with scientific ability, children talented in the fine arts (artistic, creative writing, dramatic, musical, and dancing), children with leadership abilities, and ones with mechanical or physical skills.

The book edited by Dr. Paul Witty, *The Gifted Child*, published by D. C. Heath and Company, Boston (1951), with its exhaustive coverage on identifying gifted children, mental hygiene of the gifted, the place of the community in the problem, science and art, administrative difficulties, and many other facets of the subject.

The four volume work of Dr. L. M. Terman under the inclusive title, *Genetic Studies of Genius*, published by Stanford University Press at intervals from 1925 to 1947, which contains a continuing study of 1,500 youngsters, following them into adulthood and into the next generation, and gradually constituting a classic in the study of gifted children. (Volume V due in 1958.)

The work of Hollingworth, Goddard, and many of the current experts (e.g., Passow, Worcester, Brandwein, Cutts and Moseley, Hildreth) who constitute sources of inspiration and common sense approaches for the classroom teacher.

The articles which appear periodically in one of the "musts" of the special education field, *Exceptional Children*, published by the International Council for Exceptional Children.

Actual giftedness of the teacher is not the major consideration; more important are attitude and understanding, plus a realization that assistance can come from outside. Knowledge can make a significant contribution, but by itself it fails to satisfy the numerous needs of gifted children.



## PREPARING TEACHERS FOR THE GIFTED

Whether gifted children are in classes with other children or placed in separate classrooms, they profit from having teachers alerted to materials and techniques that will challenge and excite them. The best courses available in a teacher preparation institution should therefore be included in the schedule of those who will teach the gifted. They should obviously also be exposed to the finest instructors in the colleges and universities, for they need both the inspiration and knowledge that capable, scholarly college professors in subject matter areas and in professional education are able to provide.

Every teacher should probably have these experiences, for all will have gifted children in their classes, be expected to enrich the program in a regular classroom, or help enrich it in a partially segregated environment. It is necessary to provide extensive, well-planned graduate and undergraduate work for *all* teachers because all are involved in this problem. If they aren't—or *think* they aren't—some enlightenment ought to step into the picture because it obviously is needed desperately.

How widespread is the concentration on preparing our teachers to understand and teach gifted children? The facts of the situation are available—and disheartening. Only two institutions of higher learning offer a specific sequence of courses in this area: Pennsylvania State University and Hunter College. How few “two” are is shown by the total number of colleges and universities offering sequences in one or more exceptional child areas—122 in all. As will be indicated later, a number of institutions offer isolated courses on the gifted, but not enough to provide the insights necessary.

Not a single college or university faculty member was found anywhere in the country devoting full-time to the area of gifted children. While 897 college and university faculty members were in various areas of special education, only two were in the field of the gifted. Of course, this factor ties in with the few requests for



qualified teachers in the field. Of all the exceptional child categories, fewer teachers of the gifted are requested of state, local, and college personnel agencies than are listed for teachers of mentally retarded, sight handicapped, hearing handicapped, or any of the others.

Many college teachers say they consider this subject in some of the more general courses in education, but melting it into a course which has many other demands on it cannot help but reduce the importance attached to the topic. So what if there is one lecture or assignment devoted to it out of dozens of them? The odds are certainly against its leaving a lasting impression.

One more bit of evidence will clinch for you the lack of recognition given to the preparation of teachers for the gifted. A report issued fairly recently revealed that:

1. Of 4601 persons majoring in areas of special education, only 21 had chosen the gifted child.
2. Of 5712 persons taking single courses in areas of special education, only 34 selected the gifted to study.
3. Of 1549 degrees granted in special education, just two were awarded to individuals concentrating on this field.

Those figures become even more minute when compared with degrees granted and students enrolled in other categories of teacher preparation. Need we say more about the neglect of these youngsters? The figures certainly shout the story for all to hear.

However, when we look more closely at what is being accomplished in preparing teachers in a few isolated spots, hope begins to rise. Pennsylvania State University, located in the only state that has a special certificate for teachers of "classes for the mentally advanced," offers all the courses necessary to satisfy the certificate requirements. Those requirements include the following courses:

General Methods for Teaching the Mentally Advanced.

Student Teaching—Mentally Advanced.

Arts and Crafts.

Mental and Educational Hygiene.

Diagnostic Testing and Remedial Teaching.

Psychology (or Education) of Exceptional Children.

Electives; including Mental Testing, Educational and Vocational Guidance, and Speech Correction.

In a recent letter, Dr. Margaret A. Neuber, Associate Professor of Special Education at the University and one of the persons exerting real leadership on this subject, especially in her own state, mentioned the child study, observation of gifted child behavior, and classroom observations in Pennsylvania localities which have special adjustments for the gifted, all of which are included in the first course listed above. Other related activities are summer workshops, which include a class for gifted children and a state association (Pennsylvania Association for the Study and Education of the Mentally Gifted) which has been going for more than eight years.

One of the most interesting parts of the Hunter College program (which also includes a regularly offered course on the education of gifted children) is a Vacation Demonstration School. This "School" consists of classes for children in the various exceptional child groups, with one class for the gifted. The class is kept small, select, and active, with emphasis on (1) all the academic fields; (2) opportunities for personality growth, leadership, and working with others; and (3) reaching an achievement level consistent with abilities.

Two of the institutions in Connecticut (New Haven State Teachers College and the University of Connecticut) have given attention to the subject. The former does so in a course on the "Psychology of Exceptional Children," one segment of which is on the gifted, and in summer workshops on problems in the education of gifted children. A summer course at the University in 1956 put its emphasis on materials and methods of teaching bright youngsters, and resulted in a report consolidating the students' work on grouping (annotated list), special programs, and relationships of talent and general academic ability (bibliography).

Kent State University in Ohio has offered experimental summer classes for gifted children. Drawing students from the public schools and the University elementary school, Dr. Edna Oswalt, director of

the program, has developed plans which emphasize arithmetic, literature, language arts, art, and handcraft.

In answer to a query, Dr. Maynard C. Reynolds, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota, approached the subject frankly. After calling attention to special workshops and institutes on exceptional children (including the gifted), he stated:

We have one course which is specifically concerned with the gifted . . . titled "Education of Gifted Children." The course description is as follows: "Abilities, characteristics, and education of intellectually gifted children and adults. . . ." At the moment, we have no plans to develop a full sequence of training for teachers of gifted children. It happens that in our state we have no special classes for gifted children. A great many things are developing as concerns gifted children in various schools around the state, but rarely taking the form of full special classes as we know them in Cleveland and in other centers. . . . This means that we would probably have very little market in our immediate area for teachers of gifted children as such, although there is great interest among teacher groups in general in advancing their skills and understandings so as to work with this group more effectively.

Dr. Rose E. Parker, Director of the Division of Special Education at Illinois State Normal University, took us inside the thinking of that institution on this subject. After mentioning a course entirely devoted to the gifted and another (Education of the Mental Deviate) spending about one-third of its time on them, she went on:

We do not offer a full major in this field. As a matter of fact, we have not yet evolved the principles on which we wish to base teacher preparation in this area. An active committee has been working on the problem for a year. We have a small experimental group of fifth and sixth grade children in which there is an enrichment program consisting of social science, mathematics, and biology, in the hope that we will get some concrete experience in working with gifted children before we embark on a program. I think we are in much the same situation as many other teacher-educating colleges. We feel we should be doing something, but don't know just how to do it. We have always stressed the significance of individual differences in the preparation of both elementary and secondary teachers. Long since, we gave up the idea of a text-

book-centered curriculum for children at the elementary level and have provided for differences of ability in children by means of differentiated reading and assignments. We realize that has not met the real problems in the education of the gifted child.

So it goes—and not just in Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. The problems encountered by these conscientious, hard-working, sincere people are widespread and real. In addition to the difficulties stated, they face the problems of teachers who feel teaching the gifted is a snap (“They learn so easily!”) and of the “enrichment” program which is no such thing (“So who needs special preparation for *that*?”). They are seeking solutions through trial-and-error and research, and studying closely the children, parents, and teachers involved to see whether better methods and materials can be taught and used in their teacher preparation programs.

Let us take a closer look at the case study of a college in transition as far as this problem is concerned. Until the summer of 1954, Arizona State College at Tempe offered no courses on the gifted child. It approached the subject as so many others do, incidentally, through various education courses. Then, that summer a workshop on the Education of Exceptional Children was offered on an experimental basis, just to see whether there was any interest. During the first day of a five-day registration period, 86 persons signed up, so the answer came fast. With the help of consultants and extensive materials, the participants each chose an area of concentration, and 30 (the largest group) selected the gifted child.

The fall of 1955 brought not only the first regular course on the gifted but also a complete master's degree program in special education especially aimed at the regular classroom teacher. Full sequences of courses in the specific exceptional child categories are not yet in the college catalog, but they are on the way. And near the top of the list (which is a change from the last place, usually occupied) will be a program of study for teachers preparing to do a better job with bright youngsters. The summer workshop, the special course mentioned above, a research contribution in the field,



and experience in working with gifted children will all be part of this program.

One product of the summer workshops offered each year since 1954 is a book which is completed each summer before the end of the session, consolidating and summarizing all the research, activities, films, speakers, and visits in which the registrants participated. After news of these mimeographed publications filtered out, the few on hand each year were rapidly asked for and distributed to many parts of the country. Another result was the formation of the Arizona Association for Gifted Children mentioned earlier.

The course on gifted children has brought research and projects from its students on a vast array of topics. Here are some of the subjects investigated:

- Reading program for the underachieving gifted child.
- The parent and his gifted child.
- Social adjustment of the gifted child in school and community.
- Specific enrichment techniques and materials.
- Scripts on gifted children: film and television.
- Lists of "low interest high ability" materials.
- Handbook on gifted children for teachers.
- Research classics on the gifted.
- Study of organizational methods, such as acceleration, early school entry, special classes, partial segregation, enrichment.
- Arizona and the gifted child—past, present, and future.

Since for many it is their first concrete study of gifted children, the course includes, in addition to the student projects and the topics covered by them, lectures and discussions on other subjects:

- History and present status of the gifted—overview.
- Objectives in studying these children.
- Methods and materials of identification.
- Characteristics of the gifted.
- Relationship (or lack thereof) of giftedness to race, religion, nationality, sex, and age.
- Reading achievement and the gifted.
- Seeing them through the eyes of society, the school, the parents, the children themselves.
- The teacher of the gifted.



Organizations, publications, bibliographical information.  
Local programs for the gifted.  
Looking toward the future.

A significant result of the College's offerings in this field has been apparent in the number of teachers and administrators in "The Valley of the Sun" where Tempe and Phoenix are located who are thinking, discussing, trying things out in their schools and school systems. Questioning their own practices and expressing dissatisfaction with some of them are signs that bright children here, as well as in other parts of the country, are being noticed more frequently.

Beside the formal programs in colleges and universities, there are two other basic ways in which teachers can prepare more adequately for their task.

One method is through a *planned in-service training program* in their schools or districts, where many of the objectives of a regular college course can be accomplished. Just as we often talk in teaching of "taking the children where they are" this kind of program would have to start with the teachers where *they* are, by examining their attitudes. A readiness would have to be developed for accepting the idea that values and methods other than the ones we have and use are worth discussing—a task much easier to state than to accomplish.

Does it bother us that gifted students are more retarded in achievement in relation to their ability than any other groups? Does it concern us that we speak of "individual differences" and then proceed to neglect them? Are we worried because our gifted so frequently drop out of school because we bore them? Until the answer becomes "Yes," an in-service program cannot move on, but it is worth all the time it takes to get started if the result is an affirmative answer to each of those three questions.

In-service study may bring other valuable results:

1. An understanding of the needs for immediate attention to gifted children, of what their neglect means to the country as a whole, and of the vital spot teachers occupy.

2. Techniques of identification through child study procedures.
3. Acquaintance with new educational approaches to the problem by visits to other schools and by books and articles published in recent years and months.
4. Working out, and acceptance of, a plan of acceleration, special classes, partial separation, or other administrative techniques appropriate for this school or district.

How the in-service training is to be conducted depends on what the teachers already know, what they want, facilities and time available, and materials and consultants accessible to them. The program can extend from the informality of teachers meeting together to discuss their problems on an unstructured basis to the formality of lectures, note-taking, and a textbook approach. It can consist of analyses of case studies of gifted children, or teacher accounts of procedures with bright children that have worked well for them. The setting may be special conferences; teacher meetings; workshops; seminars; college or university summer, extension or evening courses; parent-teacher meetings; or visits to industrial plants, business firms, or professional schools.

Teachers, with or without outside leadership, may list the questions to which they need answers, and then attempt to seek the answers. In a teacher workshop in San Francisco that method was followed, and the questions brought up for study reflected thoughtful consideration of the issues involved:

- How can the resources of the community be utilized effectively in an instructional program for gifted children?
- How can the program be designed to secure the intelligent coöperation of parents?
- How can an effective internship plan be designed, in coöperation between the school system and teacher education institutions, for teachers of gifted children?
- How can the isolated gifted child be provided with an enriched program of education?
- How can continuity of instruction for the migrant gifted child be insured?
- What are the attitudes and feelings of children who are aware that they are mentally gifted?

- How early do special interests emerge and how persistent are they?
- What types of curriculum will build the desired traits, learnings, and attitudes that seem most desirable for these children?
- What additional classroom materials and equipment will contribute most to a broad educational program for gifted children?
- How should the home environment be modified to further the gifted child's development?
- How does the learning rate of superior children vary with differences in type of educational program?
- How can the advantages and disadvantages in various types of education be evaluated?

Perhaps you are thinking that it is relatively simple to *ask* the questions but infinitely more difficult to *answer* them. Of course that's true. And yet, deciding on the problems that *we* face in *this* school system is a significant beginning. The kick-off has to be from that point because the solutions obtained in one locality may be useless elsewhere.

In addition to college and university programs and in-service preparation, another route has been followed by teachers with initiative and persistence: *The go-it-alone route of personal betterment.*

Some of us need no group to prod us on, no class to make us meet study deadlines, no outside force of any kind to push us into activity. We are on the move anyway, and it takes no more than the awareness of a cause to encourage our preparing for it in an intense manner. The individual means used vary as greatly as do our widely scattered interests, leading us into areas such as these:

- Travel in our community, state, country, or beyond.
- Extensive reading in the areas of our deficiencies and/or interests, in the arts, sciences, humanities, fiction or nonfiction, current events or historical bases for them.
- Recreational activities, being with people, getting to know them.
- Plays, concerts, lectures; stage and screen; radio and television.
- Organizations of a social, community, religious, or professional nature.

What is a broadening experience for one person may not be for another. What stimulates one to do a more creative job with gifted

children may bring only boredom to another. One thing is certain, however: The teacher who has gone through this entire section on preparing teachers and has come to the end without encountering even one activity in which he participates or wants to participate might ask himself seriously whether teaching bright children is his own particular cup of tea.

And if he doesn't ask, he'd better start hiding, for some parents and children who are becoming more and more aware of what is their due may have some rather pointed questions of their own.

### THE TEACHING LOAD

"Milk money; study halls; show the films; keep detailed records—what will they think of next?"

Who can blame teachers for wondering and worrying about these and the multitude of other additional duties piled on them in an era when there are more and more children and relatively fewer teachers to teach them, when making financial ends meet requires the combined efforts of all adult members of many families, when emotions seem to have been rubbed to a raw edge because our everyday tensions accumulate faster than we can resolve them?

So now we send teachers an SOS about gifted children, and they're eager to listen and to do what they can. They register for courses in their colleges and universities; read and write about the subject in their professional journals; attend conferences, institutes, and workshops; and set up in-service training programs.

The load gets heavier on the person who occupies the center of the stage. Maybe it's time that the self-appointed experts who are so anxious to tell teachers what to do and how to do it apply their energies even more than before in directions that will reduce that load, so that classes are smaller and salaries are larger. Then perhaps the gifted child will more often be guided by a teacher who represents the thickest of the academic, intellectual, and personality "cream."

Until then let's recognize how fortunate we are to have as many

skilled, sensitive, smart teachers as we have. We have always had teachers—thousands of them—who are doing their best for each child, including the gifted, even without a special program. They don't need it because they build into their own classroom all of the incentive, materials, and attitudes that encourage *each* child to work up to his capacity.

We're lucky that chance has favored us with those now teaching, for relatively few of us have made any concrete effort to attract and hold them. Talk always comes so easily—when the tax bill is a long way off!







Molding the final design . . . putting together the pieces in the best possible way . . . and there are elements still to piece together in this story about our gifted children.

*Left, Ted Akimoto; below, R. Craig Rover*



# VIII

## *Unfinished Business on the Gifted*

A BRIGHT little girl recently put adults in their proper place when she turned the tables on all the authors of books and articles on child development. She tried one on "grownup development" and tackled subjects like parents, relatives, teachers, money, food, animals, sex, and religion.<sup>1</sup> At one spot she very pointedly states,

Adults like to talk more than children do. It is their chief amusement. They like to talk to each other, about each other, about children, and about a lot of other things that do not seem interesting to me. When they are talking they do not seem to know the children are there. The longest hours in life are spent when your mother has you by the hand and stops to talk to some friends of hers on the street.

We'll have to plead guilty on several counts in our handling of the subject of this book. We *are* talking to each other, about each other, and about children. But we *do* think the topic is of concern to children, and we're certainly aware that children are "there" throughout our discussion.

However, we'll acknowledge the criticism of Jill, as she calls herself, and combine in this section many of the remaining important topics related to gifted children, rather than expand them into

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Owsley, *A Handy Guide to Grownups*, New York, Random House, 1950.

more lengthy discourse. The decks will be clear for the next—and last—chapter when we will take a penetrating look into the near future and the kinds of action we are compelled to follow.

Then, Jill, the talk will be over and we'll be ready to act.

### ATTITUDES OF GIFTED YOUNGSTERS

How these children feel about themselves and the world around frequently distinguishes them from other children. "I can't figure out a Mommy's mind," quizzically said a 4-year-old of our acquaintance, putting into words a concept not generally associated with tots his age. "I have a wonder on my mind," he said at another time, and one cannot help but be intrigued by the terminology as well as the idea behind it.

Their attitudes about themselves and their world come to the surface in less favorable ways, too—in pretending not to hear, in refusing to volunteer in classrooms after not being recognized ("why waste time on them; they *always* know the answers!"), in deliberately missing answers on tests so that they don't appear "different" (which sometimes means the same as "queer" or "eccentric").

Frustration and anger may be among their possessions, both resulting from the boredom which often accompanies waiting for others to catch up. Because they usually recognize their own abilities and realize that they are developing habits of laziness, their reaction may be one of indignation toward themselves. Dissatisfaction with one's own habits sets up the most distasteful kind of scapegoat.

Two men, in studying these attitudes, arrived at a few thoughtful observations. "High intelligence apparently does not help the individual meet everyday stress situations any more adequately than does the average person . . . the brighter students react pretty much like the average ones in trying to overcome the annoyances everyone must face, more or less, in life."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Henry Angelino, and Charles L. Shedd, "Reactions to Frustration among Normal and Superior Children," *Exceptional Children*, March, 1955, p. 229.

Many recent studies have come to similar conclusions. These children have many of the same difficulties others do, except earlier and "more so." The mistake we make is in assuming that *all* possess feelings of inferiority or inadequacy, or *all* tend toward the superior or smug end of the scale. Both of these generalities are riddled with exceptions.

What we can conclude, however, is that gifted children *more frequently* possess certain attitudes than do most children chosen at random from the general population. Then we are not caught in the spot of seeing a particular point of view or attitude in *each* member of this numerically massive group.

Let us look at some of the more frequently shared viewpoints of gifted children:

More rational approach to own abilities, limitations, and personal problems.

Concern regarding sex, religion, and a philosophy of life similar to that of other children, but frequently sooner.

Feeling of inferiority toward physical skills because they are frequently mastered slower than mental skills.

Feeling of social inadequacy because they are often younger and smaller than those on whose social level they are; accentuated for boys, who lag behind girls in their physical maturity.

Feeling of being alone.

Failure to enjoy "ordinary" interests, activities, and conversations of their age group; may be followed by a tendency to withdraw.

Desire to be accepted and the same as others.

Resentment of educational programs that for them are dull, unchallenging, and unproductive.

Awareness of the unfavorable attitudes toward them of some adults and peers.

Sensitivity to the teacher who feels threatened by their brightness.

Recognition that in this world of ours there are circumstances and conditions that one cannot change, so there is generally an easier, earlier, and more philosophic adaptation to the inevitable.

More apparent resentment toward both parental pressures and parental neglect.

In their attitudes toward school, gifted children more frequently than others will resent wasted time, unnecessary drill, dull or in-



adequate materials, incompetent teachers and teaching, and no time for independent activities and growth. Just as they are more analytical toward themselves so are they toward their teacher, their school, and the school program. School work that is meaningful to them, responsibilities that help extend their horizons, projects and problems that make them dig, all provide satisfactions which soften their outlook toward an environment which, with less effort, will appear woefully dreary and deadening.

How they feel about special classes in which they are separated from others depends upon which gifted children and which research people you ask. And the interesting part (as so often happens in surveys) is that you can obtain whatever answer you want. Just as often as you hear, "We want to stay with the other kids; we don't want to be singled out," you can also bend an ear and pick up these reverberations, "We're sick and tired of being held back!" The former group may add, "If we stay, they don't call us 'Brain' and other names like that," to which others will counter, "They call us names wherever we are." In one community, pulling them out for special attention encourages rancor; in another it helps develop a healthy respect for scholastic ability.

This kind of pro and con treatment won't satisfy the rigid souls who want all groups to fit into definite, unbendable molds. However, the inescapable truth is that gifted youngsters, just like other children, are largely a product of their environment, and their attitudes toward the ways in which their teachers teach will differ as their orientation to those situations differ. What their parents and other adults say (and the feelings these children have toward these adult groups) will determine how they feel about special classes. Those who expect a pat answer which reflects the viewpoint of all the gifted are bound to be disappointed.

An interesting attitude survey conducted by Ruth Strang reflected some of the similarities and differences of the gifted in their feelings toward growing up.<sup>3</sup> Although the anthropologist, Margaret

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Strang, "Gifted Adolescents' Views of Growing Up," *Exceptional Children*, October, 1956, pp. 10-15, 20.

Mead, found some societies where teen-agers are not subjected to the storm and stress we usually associate with that age level, our society continues to reflect these disturbances within the family, community, and school. When comparing two groups—gifted and relatively average—Dr. Strang found that about the *same* proportion of children in each group expressed the following feelings.

Dissatisfaction with own body changes or status	24%
Concern with improving or maintaining personal appearance	9
Satisfaction with sibling relationships	24
Problems of sibling relationships	20
Satisfaction concerning relationships with parents	49
Concern with problems of parents or family	12
Desire for a particular vocation	33
Indecision about vocation	23
Indications of self-acceptance	33
Concern with scholastic success or grades	22
Dissatisfaction with school experiences	10
Concern with future financial security	14
Concern with social behavior (making friends, getting along with people)	21
Concern with problems of morality or religion	20

She also found, however, that many attitudes *differed* quite a bit.

	Average	Gifted
Feeling of increasing independence and self-direction	22%	17%
Awareness of increasing responsibility	18	6
Desire to own or operate a car	15	7
Concern with marriage or raising a family	29	22
Satisfaction with own body growth or status	18	33
Desire for secure world peace	11	22
Satisfaction concerning relationships with peers	32	43
Desire for greater acceptance with peers	6	11
Lack of self-acceptance, desire for personality change	13	19
Concern with boy-girl relations	35	45
Enjoyment of voluntary reading	20	38
Interest in sports	12	19
Lack of closeness or rapport with parents	5	12
Problems about money	6	11

More information on this subject came through a survey just completed in Arizona where teachers were asked to select gifted children to whom a lengthy questionnaire was then administered. The completed questionnaires supplied the following information.

The many ways in which gifted children are *similar* to others becomes apparent as we notice their activities, interests, desires, and fears.

We should realize that the part of the country determines many of a child's interests and activities, and in Arizona if we are to "take the child where he is," that location may be in a swimming pool or on a horse. The academic program can capitalize on an awareness of these outside interests.

These gifted children state that they have many friends, with their giftedness apparently extending into the social realm. They are also active physically and love sports. These conclusions are in line with the studies of Terman, Witty, and others which indicated that gifted children, as a group, are above average in most other categories as well as in mentality and talents.

Gifted children like to read and appear to read well. However, their specific choices were frequently trite and in some cases even showed poor taste; an indication that the areas of language arts and children's literature appear to need considerable attention in our schools and homes.

Gifted children tend to behave and misbehave as others do, and are punished by their parents with no special regard for their IQ.

Gifted children like most teachers, and appreciate those who combine firmness with affection and a sense of humor. Their attitude toward school is probably much more affirmative than would be that of a group of so-called average children.

Most gifted children seem to be fairly happy and well-adjusted; relatively few stated unusual fears and worries.

The lives of gifted children generally seem enriched as indicated by the large number of pets, books, and toys, the amount of travel, the reading of parents, and the time their parents spend with them.

To depart from generalities which inevitably result from tabulations and the melting together of opinions, let's read a statement written by a former "Terman child" after he had appeared on a panel before a graduate college class discussing problems of the gifted. He wrote:

It was a heartening experience to encounter so many earnest teachers. I don't think they got their money's worth from our disconnected, off the cuff discussion. For what it is worth, here is a more considered opinion of the problems they presented.

In my own situation, I must draw on personal observation and recollection. In the small California town where I went to elementary and high school, there was one other student in the Terman study, although I did not know this until after I was graduated from high school. With perhaps a few exceptions, I think most of the subjects in the group were not aware of their selection or of the study, and I think perhaps this was wrong. At any rate, this other subject I refer to was my closest boyhood friend, and viewing our early years from the perspective now available, it seems to me what I know of his experience corroborates my present opinion of my own.

Being as charitable as possible, I would say that both of us were behavior problems. We both participated in athletics and a number of outside activities. I think we both had difficulty in accepting the teacher's attitude toward us. With a few notable exceptions, these attitudes were a reflection of the school administration.

We were both emotionally immature and since the regular classroom work offered virtually no challenge, we spent a good deal of time thinking up ways of demonstrating our contempt for certain academic exercises which appeared childish to us. We cherished a very superior attitude toward most of our fellow students and particularly toward those who seemed to have any difficulty with courses and problems which seemed childish and sort of a snap to us. We must have been insufferable.

I think the teachers sensed our attitudes and responded in some instances with resentment.

A year or two ago, my friend and I recalled our various experiences and our opinions of our teachers, and in most instances, we were in agreement.

We felt and still feel that what we desperately needed was an attitude of friendliness, respect, and challenge. We were both fortunate to experience this in high school from a math teacher, a history teacher and a sociology teacher. And these three individuals are probably responsible for whatever benefits we received from the time spent in that school.

Neither my friend nor I went on to college. I think had we known of the Terman study and been aware of the possibility of scholarships at S\_\_\_\_\_, our lives would have been quite different. It now seems that both



of us failed to acquire any appreciation of the value of method or the mechanisms of learning.

When Dr. P—— mentioned English and the parts of speech on the panel, I was vividly reminded of my own experience. This phase of English appeared to me at the time to be a waste of effort, a lot of mechanical nonsense, and I completely rejected it. My method was much easier, and for me, a satisfactory approach to grammar. A sentence either sounded right or wrong. And I have no understanding at all of the principals of sentence structure. Yet, I earned my living as an author and journalist for more than ten years.

Perhaps what we did was to jump ahead without realizing that by scrapping the necessary basic knowledge, we were rejecting something that would become increasingly valuable.

Both of us were challenged to explore literature by teachers. In my case, it was a young professor in the college town where I lived.

The library in this small town had many attractions. At first, it was an excuse to get out at night, but when we discovered the pleasure of reading, it became a haven of refuge, an opening to exciting experiences. It seems to me our urban pattern of living, where children must be driven in the car long distances to reach a library, is a real threat to my children.

It also seems to me that my friend and I would have benefited had some mature person emphasized what we now recognize as the cultural pleasures of knowledge, apart from the economic advantages.

If all of this can be boiled down into anything useful, I think it might be fair to state:

That an adequate teacher should be able to recognize children who are advanced beyond their chronological age in any field;

That such a teacher should attempt to achieve more than just a teacher-student relationship;

That such a teacher should evidence some recognition of the child's possibilities and attempt to create a spirit of coöperation in the great adventure of learning.

I believe the gifted child is more apt to ask: "Why?" and to be less satisfied with the stock responses. I believe such a child is more rebellious and less susceptible to regimentation, and more unpredictable than his fellows.

That is one man's opinion, an opinion to be listened to and pondered over, for he was a gifted child with all the pent-up abilities so frequently possessed by these youngsters. Despite his successes



he recognizes "what might have been," especially on the basis of the best teachers available.

### WHAT ABOUT NURSERY SCHOOL?

"It's early enough to start school at five or six! There's no sense in earlier schooling at three or four. Especially for the gifted child—they learn so much more quickly anyway."

So goes the antinursery-school argument, with additions such as (1) it replaces the home and parents and (2) it exposes them to so many additional illnesses.

Saying that a particular experience is either good or bad doesn't make much sense, however. Good for whom? Bad for whom? This teacher so fine for most children may be all wrong for Janie; that one so awful for most children might be just what the doctor ordered for Johnnie. And so it goes with nursery schools too, but with one big difference—a competently operated nursery school cannot help but aid the development of most children, whether they are gifted or not.

What are the advantages provided by a well-run nursery school? What can it provide that even the best home environment does not? First, it must be stated emphatically that it will not *replace* the home and family; it *supplements* it, augments, broadens, expands the horizons so amply furnished in a sound home setting. But there are other, concrete contributions it can make:

Greater areas for play space than the average home has.

More and larger play equipment.

Opportunities to play with others of the same age and under trained supervision.

Supervised activities in accordance with the needs of an individual child—toward more aggression or less; more independence or less; more, or fewer, contacts with books, records, outside and inside play, clay, paint, trains, doll houses.

Consistent handling in helping release tensions, which even the best homes might not be able to provide.

Opportunities for noisy time and quiet time, for play with boys and girls, for climbing and digging and expressing one's self—always under the guidance of an expert teacher.

The advantages of a good nursery school are numerous and obvious, for these are key years in a child's development, and we want them to be filled to the brim with the excitement of new experiences and the acceptance of those who understand his needs. A good nursery school is the best environment for such hopes, with its big blocks, climbing apparatus, harmless hulk of an old truck or fire engine, pile of phonograph records, paint and easels, fruit juice and well-balanced lunch, individual, twosome, and group activities, neighborhood trips, stories, and conversations. Here can be the opening of magic doors to science, history, art, and music, to the arts of persuasion and compromise, and to school in its most pleasant form. Here reading and number concepts can take on a glow that, if carefully nurtured, can extend on into the many academic years to follow.

Parents can profit quite directly too. Seeing their child in a group can help them to be more objective regarding his personality and social, physical, and mental abilities. They can be much more realistic in what to expect and what not to expect. New vistas can be opened to the child on which his folks can follow through, with plants, community excursions, games, and books. The richness of the child's life can easily spill over into the lives of his mother and dad.

How does one tell whether a nursery school really is a good one? What should one look for or ask about? Here are some important guide-lines, from the National Association of Nursery Education:

1. Provides ample indoor and outdoor space; at least 35 square feet of free space per child indoors and out.
2. Has safe, sanitary, and hygienic housing conditions.
3. Protects and promotes the child's health.
4. Provides appropriate and sufficient equipment and play materials for the child's growth.
5. Has enough good teachers both to guide group living and to take care of individual children's needs.

6. Helps the child to gain increasing power and facility in the use of language, paints, clay, blocks and other constructive materials to express his understanding of ever-widening experiences; seldom shown or told what to make, but is encouraged to use materials creatively.
7. Helps children develop wholesome attitudes toward their own bodies and bodily functions.
8. Provides real opportunities for the child's social adjustment.
9. Considers parents as well as children.
10. Has teachers who are well-adjusted and who understand children and how they learn.
11. Pays attention to what a child does, but also to why he does it and how to help him.
12. Provides for child observation, records progress and development, guides parents to wiser procedures.
13. Considers the varying needs of the entire family with special responsibility for the growth and protection of the child himself.
14. Recognizes the importance of regularity in the lives of young children but "routines" are not over-stressed.
15. Realizes the need for close coöperation in the entire nursery school staff.
16. Uses all available community resources.

A child's parents usually do well, but here's a chance for more. The home has a lot of enrichment in it, but here are added opportunities. Children from the neighborhood are outside a youngster's house ready to play with him, but now he has them *plus* other children *and* a teacher who knows when to guide, when to lead, and when to evaporate right out of the picture.

Yet, a poor nursery school is worse than none at all. Its standards have to be high or it just won't fill the bill. We don't want any children—gifted or others—to get off to school on the wrong foot, so here are a few of the distress signals:

Is it a parking place, a baby-sitting service, with few of the qualifications already listed?

Are the "administrators" in it merely to make money?

Are we using it just because there's a new baby at home?

One of the key questions, of course, is "Can we afford it?" and perhaps it should be the first one asked; coöperative endeavors are

sometimes the answer. Another that surpasses all in importance is this one: "Is it the right place for *this* child?" If you don't know the answer before he starts, it will come soon after he enters; if he often wants to stay home (it's normal for him to want to once in a while), if he is unhappy while he's there, if he seems to have little added to his interests and activities, then perhaps it isn't the right one for him—for others, maybe, but not quite correct for his individual needs.

Most 3- and 4-year-olds thrive on the experiences a good nursery school provides. The blossoming out of gifted youngsters especially find here the rich and fulfilling opportunities to stretch in all directions, toward science experimentation, language expansion, and musical accomplishment. Since few of us as parents can always keep our sights beyond those of the brightest children, we need help. And here is one of the best sources for it.

It takes an unusually fine nursery school to stimulate the gifted child for two full years, especially if he then moves on to kindergarten. And it demands an expert kindergarten teacher to help him continue to profit from his rich experiences in the nursery school. No rule can be set up for nursery plus kindergarten; the variables of the child and the teacher are the governing factors.

Oh, yes, that point about its exposing them to so many additional illnesses—the American Academy of Pediatrics took care of that a few years back in this way: "It is now well established that groups of children from the ages of 3 to 5 years in properly supervised institutions enjoy good health and can be kept about as free from disease as children of similar ages who are cared for in their homes." This additional statement from the Academy may also be of interest: "Statistics show that by far the greatest number of accidents among young children occur when children are not supervised. The record of well-organized nursery schools is far better than the accident record for young children not in a supervised school."

The warmth of a good teacher; a friendly environment; things to play with, listen to, jump on, push, pull, climb under, and build

with; plenty of room—these are some of the ingredients that wise parents seek for their 3- and 4-year-olds. Sometimes they are fortunate enough to find them, and when they do, they have helped start an affirmative attitude toward education that has all the odds on its side for the years ahead. We can expect fewer of the gifted with this beginning to drop out of school before they have attained the goals of which they are capable—if the principles of sound nursery school education are continued straight through.

### THE PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE SCHOOL QUESTION

For most of us there is no question of which kind of elementary school our children will attend. The obvious—and only—choice is the public school down the street. But a problem arises if we are not satisfied with that institution, if it isn't meeting the needs of this child, or if there is a family tradition of private education. It comes up if the child's health demands another locality and the whole family can't move. It may come up (*and* be settled very quickly) if the family just cannot afford the tuition of a private school.

The advantages and disadvantages of private and public schools are not clear-cut. Many of the items in the private school list below you may find in the public school your children attend. However, these are some of the usual ones we associate with the two types. Only the *private* school factors will be itemized, with the public school attributes on the other side of the fence.

#### ADVANTAGES:

1. Selectivity among students, with corresponding intellectual competition and stimulation
2. Smaller classes, more individual teaching and guidance
3. More intensive preparation for college
4. Development of social and athletic potentialities
5. Not required to conform to community pressures

#### DISADVANTAGES:

1. Cost
2. Withdrawn from the family, neighborhood, or community group; limits coeducational opportunities



3. Do less well in college academic areas than public school graduates, even in areas like math and science, according to a study of 45,000 students reported in the September 21, 1957, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*.
4. Less adept at developing independence on part of students; individualized attention may result in less self-reliance
5. Because they frequently do not have to meet teacher certification standards, the teachers may be low on the ability and preparation scales
6. An increasingly high percentage of entrants into the top-notch universities are from public high schools

It should be obvious that most of these points depend on the specific school and child, and that they sometimes have to be qualified. For example, while the cost may range from \$200 to more than \$2000 a year, scholarships are sometimes available. While the youngster may be withdrawn from the family (a disadvantage above), doesn't the *kind* of family make a big difference? Although the teachers may sometimes not meet state standards, in some situations they may more adequately match the background of the child and his family.

A number of pertinent questions, and the answers to them, may help where this choice is a real problem:

Does the child have specific health, emotional, or academic needs that the public school cannot meet?

Will the private school be able to provide for them?

How does the youngster feel about going to a private school?

Then, of course, there is the problem of how to go about choosing the school once a decision has been made. Several books can be helpful, especially the most recent *Handbook of Private Schools* published by Porter Sargent, Boston. Recommendations from the local public school (administrator, teachers, counselors, board members), friends who have already gone through the problem, catalogs and other information obtained directly from the schools, visits to the schools, graduates of the schools—all of these can help you decide, and maybe will change your mind one way or another. They can assist in providing information on teacher caliber, cur-

riculum, food and housing, cost, religion, scholarships, administrative ability, and academic achievements.

In all fairness it must be emphasized that there is nothing inherently good or bad in either the public or private school set-up. Fine teachers and poor ones, stimulation and boredom, cleanliness and safety and the absence of both, good and bad influences, all of these and many other extremes can frequently be found in schools on both lists.

The parent whose gifted child is not being challenged sufficiently in the public school, may find just what he wants a few thousand miles away and at a substantial cost. *Or* he might find what he wants after one conference with a principal and a transfer to another teacher's room.

We ought not pick up and run so quickly from our public schools. They deserve our support and confidence. In only a minority of cases is it worth giving up family and neighborhood relationships and the sense of belonging with the majority in order to transfer to a different type of school setting. The highest goals can usually be attained in the channels through which most of us passed, especially with the added research and evaluations of the intervening years.

### THE GIFTED NEED GUIDANCE TOO

Just because the gifted are especially good at analyzing themselves and their problems, does that mean they don't need or want help from outside? Even the brightest political, business, and labor leaders ask for the advice, assistance, and reactions of others. The little fellows with mental gifts or special talents are no less in need. Nor are they generally smug about their ability to decide things for themselves. Even though they frequently know very well how bright they are, they are subject to the same feelings of inadequacy, and the same requirement of an occasional good listener which all of us ought to have once in a while. And if they *are* smug about their possessions, a steady "listening post" should be nearby.

While more adept than the average person in analyzing and discussing their strengths and weaknesses, even the smartest among us cannot be completely objective regarding our abilities, appearance, and personality.

Guidance comes from parents and teachers, through the home, nursery school and on to the highest academic levels attained, in the classroom and in the offices of specialized counseling personnel and administrators. Each child needs it, and the presence or absence of giftedness won't dictate the amount. The difficulty in connection with bright children occurs sometimes because we forget them. "They'll get along all right; they're smart"—thus the usual pattern of neglect begins. "Don't the studies show they're more stable emotionally?"—and thus we slough them off to make room for others.

"But I'm a child too," they might reply. "I need the advantages of your maturity, your judgment. I need to have someone listen to me too." And so we may begin to understand that all require the acceptance of others.

For some very obvious reasons the gifted child may require help even *more* than others. Has he been tossed back on his own resources since early childhood? Do his parents expect more of him than his considerable abilities can accomplish? Has he been alone more than he wants to be? Have there been teachers in his experience who have acted as though he threatened their authority? Has he become impatient, inconsiderate, overly aggressive, or demanding because of the superiority he possesses? Has he been discouraged because he recognizes his capacity but hasn't been able to work up to it? For these and many other reasons his counseling requirements may be very high.

No matter toward whose hands these counseling duties gravitate, the objectives for gifted children remain quite specific. (If they seem to overlap with the goals for *all* children, don't assume that is an accident. We should expect them to.)

Recognition and acceptance of own abilities and limitations, of the fact that superiority may not permeate all activities.  
Respect for the abilities and acceptance of the limitations of others.

Establishment of attainable and realistic goals and assistance toward reaching them—educational, vocational, social, physical, emotional.

Provision of experiences and activities which provide balance and satisfaction.

Help in participating with and getting along with others, but not at the expense of solitary activities and achievement.

Recognition of the need for empathy, respect, and acceptance of the individual as he is, for assisting rather than exploiting.

Direction toward resources which will help satisfy needs.

Development of a responsibility toward others based on his gifts and talents.

Preservation of the right of each individual to make his own educational and vocational decisions, and to maintain his personal initiative and responsibility.

Assistance in analyzing personal and scholastic problems.

Early identification of gifted children, alertness of all persons who have contacts with them, use of cumulative records, anecdotal materials, tests, observation, and other child study techniques all play a part in the guidance picture. So do informal conversations at dinner and to and from school, the gym teacher's awareness of physical limitations, the art teacher's noticing a fine sense of color, the librarian's alertness to reading abilities and interests, the counselor's analysis of test results, the group approach in a high school course in careers, and the specialists in the areas of speech, hearing, sight, and emotional problems.

Good teachers accept a guidance point of view based on knowing the child and doing something about his problems. Just because he is working up to his grade level does not mean that no difficulty exists; the objective should be to help him raise his sights and accomplishments right up to his *capacity*, and that capacity may be far beyond the grade where he is now enrolled. If he is under-achieving, what are the reasons? Whose fault is it, and what can be done about it? Guidance and teaching are as intertwined as a ball of yarn, and the competent teacher realizes that academic achievement follows closely on the heels of a stable, happy home and school environment.

If we agree that one of our objectives is to stimulate the gifted



to progress academically just as far as they can go, then we must recognize the importance of studies which indicate that guidance helps encourage youngsters to stay in school longer. Guide them, help them realize what an education means, alert them to their own abilities, treat them to the pleasure of making decisions based on a sound foundation of fact and understanding. The result may be a university graduate who might otherwise have dropped by the way when he was only 16.

Values and activities related to guidance need not stop at graduation or any of the educational levels. Follow-up studies will answer questions like these: Did they make good use of their abilities? Are their earnings what they should be for persons with the potentialities they showed? What ideas do they now have on the basis of their job experiences which can help us improve the school program for gifted children?

One such specific value of educational guidance was shown in a report by Rothney and Roens.<sup>4</sup> Two groups of high school students were studied, one of which received educational guidance while the other did not. Of the first group, 53 percent went on to college; only 36 percent of the nonguided group did, even though both groups were equated on intelligence and other important variables.

Guidance is *not* telling a fellow what to do. It is helping him do better what he might have accomplished with some degree of success anyway. And our families, our teachers, the other school personnel, neighbors, friends, and the folks around the neighborhood have all contributed one or more pieces to the jigsaw that each one of us has become. Formally or informally, for good or evil, it was guidance, and we need more of it, but in expert, trained hands.

#### GUIDANCE TOWARD VOCATIONAL CHOICES

A very wise man by the name of Thomas Carlyle once said: "It is the first of all problems for a man to find out what kind of work he is to do in this universe."

<sup>4</sup> J. W. M. Rothney, and B. A. Roens, *Guidance of American Youth: An Experimental Study*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1950.



Doesn't that make the problem important enough to single it out from the mass of problems with which guidance deals? It is an especially tough one for bright youth, for they have so many areas to choose from, so many vocations in which they could be successful. Their situation is a great deal different from that of the person who can serve food, run an elevator, or make simple entries in a notebook and even then can barely make the grade. *Here* we're talking about an individual who can contribute toward our knowledge of how cells multiply in a malignancy, how rays of various energies can be harnessed for peaceful pursuits, *and* how bigger buildings, longer bridges, and safer stratospheric conveyances can be constructed. For the gifted group the occupational possibilities are enticingly numerous; they can do equally well in all. So what to do?

Certain rules of the game have to be established, for example:

1. It's their life and their own decision.
2. The choices are not limited to ones a person knows about. To present a complete picture, we should put into the hopper all the others for which he can be qualified and in which he might be interested if he only knew about them.
3. The gifted are generally good at analyzing themselves; so their own analysis is important.
4. Guidance, information, and experiences of the early years will help the individual make a decision later on.

Competent counseling will point out new fields which the individual may never have considered. Encourage delaying a decision until the major possibilities have been thoroughly surveyed; help the youngster reason in a rational way through parental pressures toward or away from a particular vocation; and open the way toward scholarship opportunities. Advanced study versus getting a job may be the question of the moment; although no one can decide for the person intimately involved, what are the facts now and for the future?

While there are differences of opinion about when a decision should be made about one's job future (and here too it depends a great deal on the individual involved), generally the early college years are the time. Of course, a sound decision might be arrived at

even earlier, but efforts should be made not to delay one beyond that time. Elementary and secondary school pressures in even a kidding way have no place in a task that constitutes one of the most serious dilemmas each of us ever faces.

The files of guidance personnel bulge with job materials, details of college and university programs, and figures on earnings and employment trends. We can expect even more data regarding skill and professional fields during the next few years as our manpower needs become more acute. The Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington will continue to provide the most authoritative basic information. And from the American Personnel and Guidance Association and one of its divisions, the National Vocational Guidance Association, come valuable materials in this area. These two organizations and their major publications (*The Personnel and Guidance Journal* and *The Vocational Guidance Quarterly*) are located at 1534 O Street, N.W., Washington 5, D.C.

While gifted youngsters will frequently find ways to guide themselves, they should not be expected to resolve conflicts with their parents without emotion and without help. Nor can they be expected to know all the sources for information at the finger-tips of a guidance person who has kept on top of the latest releases available.

Sometimes we face a difficulty in encouraging a young person to think about his vocational future. "Couldn't care less" might be his reaction, an attitude which if permitted to continue unchallenged for too long a time may lead to disillusionment. A stern finger-wagging of George Bernard Shaw seems appropriate in that problem situation: "Take care to get what you like or you will be forced to like what you get."

One of the vocational areas it is important to filter out for special treatment as far as the gifted are concerned is one which needs them desperately. Engineering, medicine, scientific research—they and related fields are publicized a great deal in efforts to entice our bright youth. And they'll get most of those who advance academically to the heights of their abilities. But who will encourage the gifted ones to stay in school, who will inspire them to work to their capacities, who will provide the professional understanding and

guidance that is vital? Despite the earnings (which have always been too limited), the respect (which is shamefully limited), and the restricted opportunities for advancement (whatever that means!), the profession into which we *must* bring a fair share of our best minds is teaching. The teacher on all levels is the one who will be the most valuable instrument to help us see that the loss of the gifted of present and past generations does not extend into the future. Fewer of the mediocre and more of the wonderful teachers we now have are essential.

"I didn't bring up my son and daughter to spend their lives in classrooms" can be answered by, "Maybe not, but your *grandson* and *granddaughter* deserve the best, and they won't get it unless we do some deliberate planning for attracting *somebody's* bright sons and daughters!"

### GUIDANCE TOWARD CHOICE OF A COLLEGE

Just as deciding on a career takes the clearest, most completely honest thinking of one's entire life, so does the decision of which college to attend—or whether to go at all. Many of us have worked ourselves into a frantic state of insisting that "everyone" should go to college, a claim that hardly demands the unanimity we attach to it. *Really*, everyone? Regardless of the kind of work one wants to do? Regardless of the motivation and interest? Regardless of one's qualifications for profiting from the experience?

Among our gifted youth we will undoubtedly find a higher proportion aiming toward work dependent on college preparation, with strong educational motivation, and with adequate qualifications than we have in the population as a whole. For them the question is more "which" and "when" rather than "whether."

The planning should begin early, perhaps in the beginning high school years. It should be flexible, bending as the objectives and ambitions of the youngster involved bend. It should be based on the wishes of the one most deeply involved; just as in other guidance situations, there is no room here for dictation.

One can't plan without information, and that information can

come from one of the complete college guides available in most libraries. The guide will provide details on topics like these:

Accreditation	Endowments
Location	Placement service
Cost	Fraternities and sororities
Size	Entrance qualifications
Scholarships	Religious preference, if any
Courses	Size of library
Faculty	Special academic programs
Facilities	Faculty-student ratio

Two of those factors should be spotlighted, for they may be the deciding items. While discrimination based on race and religion is on the decline as we accept more readily the fact that each person deserves to be judged on his or her own personal merits, it remains something that still has to be considered in connection with some institutions of higher learning. A few will make no effort to conceal their discriminatory entrance practices, more than a few maintain unwritten rulings against certain so-called minority groups, and an encouragingly large number proudly publicize their intention to admit any student who can meet their scholastic requirements. Among the private institutions, Roosevelt University in Chicago has steadfastly maintained its integrity on that subject, and of course, most public colleges and universities maintain theirs without the necessity of announcing the fact. If you're not sure on the religious angle, just check to see whether they have a Newman Club (Catholic), Hillel (Jewish), or any of the Protestant clubs. Their absence may be your answer.

Another important point is the schools with "specialties," whether they are art, music, hotel management, restaurant management, or any of the other areas. If the choice narrows down to a college with a specialty that the student is interested in and one with that area in less qualified hands, the chips should always fall with the former.

The expense angle is almost always a consideration, and all sources for earnings before college entry and scholarships should be



tapped. More parents, guidance personnel, and teachers are realizing the disadvantages of steadily "working one's way through." Despite its contribution toward maturity and the frequent necessity of it if one is to go on in school at all, the way it interferes with educational and other growth opportunities must be recognized. Summer work and occasional school year occupations are much to be preferred. At your local library you might want to look up *Financial Aid for College Students: Undergraduate*, Education Bulletin 1957, No. 18. It is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office for \$1.00. (No. 17 on financial aid for graduate students is available from the same source for \$.50.)

Figures like these are current in people's thinking about college expenses; they do *not* include transportation costs:

\$1500 a year for tuition and living expenses at public colleges (minimum).

\$2000 a year for tuition and living expenses at private colleges (minimum).

With the educator's recommendations that students be sure to have enough money to see them through their freshman year at least, and with a recent survey indicating that only 15 percent of high school students with the best grades stated they "could afford to go to college," we can begin to see the cost problem in its proper perspective. Six thousand dollars is a low cost for a college education, but even in a period of inflation it's a lot of money!<sup>5</sup>

One's information about particular colleges can be rounded out in various ways: School catalogs available in the high school counselors' offices; visits to colleges which are near enough; interviews with graduates, students, and their parents. These methods will help fill in the more limited data of the college guides. The occupational approach can also be used, by contacting professional organizations such as the American Library Association, American Medical Association, and American Bar Association to find out which schools meet their requirements.

<sup>5</sup> These figures come from Sylvia Porter's newspaper column, "Your Money's Worth," April 19, 1957, appearing in *Arizona Republic*, Phoenix.



Even the young people who can profit most from a college education are sometimes stubborn about continuing their preparation for work in line with their aptitudes. To them their reasons make good sense, and to others they may too—reasons like discouragingly dull teachers, programs they've been subjected to on the high school level, and a tight financial situation in the family. But the record is clear and complete about earnings of those who have and have not attended college; the former lead the way by far, almost to the extent of a 100 percent difference—making a college degree worth \$75,000 to \$100,000 in cold cash! The more evasive satisfactions obtained through attaining goals in appreciation and understanding are difficult to pin-point, but the capable ones who do not go to college know what we're talking about.

When college choosing is being done, we have to be careful not to be tempted by factors which are less important in the long run. Nearness to home, scholarships, tempting housing, or less durable reasons should be discounted in the shadow of the most vital item of all: Will this college or university meet my academic needs and professional goals? Will I be able to look back at it and say that these were the most productive, worthwhile four years of my life? Obviously no one can assure an affirmative answer, but the facts available can point out whether one is on the right track.

A number of books have come out in recent years to help guide the future college student. A few of them are listed below.

*Choosing the Right College* by Annette Turngren (Harper).

*College Bound* by Samuel G. Brownstein and *How to Prepare for College Entrance Examinations* by Samuel G. Brownstein and Mitchel Weiner (Barron's Educational Series).

*So You're Going to College* and *Lovejoy's College Guide* by Clarence E. Lovejoy (Simon and Schuster).

*Choosing a College* by John R. Tunis (Harcourt, Brace).

*American Colleges and Universities* (American Council on Education).

*Opportunities in Inter-Racial Colleges* edited by Richard L. Plaut (National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students).

While numbers by themselves have little meaning we ought to recognize where we stand in the worldwide college picture. Simple

comparisons tell the story: In 1955, New York City alone (excluding all its suburbs) had more students in institutions of higher learning than did all of France or all of Italy, and twice as many as did Canada.

### THE GIFTED IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Looking at much of the recent literature on the gifted, one would think that this is a new problem and that it exists only in this country. There's no doubt about the fact that we're toughest on ourselves, most critical of our own deficiencies, but maybe it's about time we broadened our sights and took an honest look beyond our borders. It may put the pinch on national dignity, but if we're honest we have to admit that other countries have their gifted too—and that they may even be as concerned about them as we are.

In most other countries attitudes toward education do not exactly correspond to ours. For example, up to the present time few have had a similar mass approach to higher education, but many see to it that the young people who have advanced to that level need have no financial worries because the government recognizes their values to the national picture. Perhaps we should curb our smugness because for generations some of them have been singling out their most gifted for special attention. Maybe we can learn something.

More descriptive material is available about the British approach than on any of the others, but even it is quite limited. At the age of 11 the children take an entrance examination upon which their assignments to secondary schools are based; they will be directed into a grammar school (college and university preparatory), technical school (preparation for trades, industry, or business), or secondary modern school (terminal general secondary education). Those with the best examination grades go to the grammar schools where classes are small, homogeneous grouping in classes is set up on the basis of the examination, and more individual work,

projects, and more difficult subjects (such as advanced work in science and mathematics) are provided for the gifted.

Because the grammar schools can accept only a limited number of students, some of the gifted are forced to go to the secondary modern schools. Overcrowded conditions and the terminal factor make these children academic brothers to thousands of our own neglected gifted youngsters.

In many of the British private schools the family's financial conditions are the sole criterion for entry. For that reason they do not necessarily have the high average level of intelligence and ability to be found in the grammar schools.

Ability grouping is used to a large extent in the British secondary schools. That may be a controversial point; less debatable is the more favorable teacher-pupil ratio than exists in most of our schools. They have been experimenting, as have we, with encouraging bright students to take advanced work and to participate in extensive extra-curricular activities.

The government's point of view is more clearly discerned on the university level where there are government-sponsored scholarships and grants to the institutions enabling them to keep fees at a reasonable level. The general principle is that no qualified person will be kept from attending a university because of financial reasons. The ministries of education in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland all participate in the awarding of grants and competitive scholarships.

Direct scholarship aid, long-term loans, and free university education are the rule in many countries, with varying approaches in one or more of those directions in each of the following: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Union of South Africa, Uruguay.

There are no doubt plenty of others, especially among some of the more economically backward countries where the leadership

recognizes that if the countries are ever to rise out of their socio-economic morass, the gifted among their youth will do the pulling and pushing. Educations abroad with the stipulation attached that they must return to their own country for a period extending anywhere from one year to a lifetime is a fairly common practice. The more limited the country's resources are the greater is its need for developing this most valuable resource of all; in such countries we frequently notice a comparatively high degree of governmental concern and action to help in specific financial ways.

In the years ahead we can anticipate more international meetings on this subject. A coöperative approach will help build up interest and activity everywhere—we all stand to gain from the broadest approach possible.

### RESEARCH NEEDED—FAST!

"And what is a weed?" asked Emerson, to which he answered, "A plant whose virtues have not been discovered." So it is with a gifted child and the many approaches to helping him become the useful person to which his capabilities entitle him—and us.

We are on our way toward discovering the virtues of various programs for the gifted because the dam has broken and a virtual torrent of words has been released on the subject, especially in the professional education and popular magazines. The least we can expect is that either by accident or design some ideas will be studied and tried, and some of them will work.

Brains are attacking the problem, in the research manner of A. Harry Passow and others of the Talented Youth Project, in the writings of intuitive persons of the caliber of Paul Witty and Paul Brandwein, in the considerable collective abilities of the personnel of Science Research Associates, in the interest of our largest foundations, and in the efforts of many others.

But we're just on the threshold of real advances in working and living with our gifted. Now that the spotlight has been flashed on



the subject all across the country, and beyond, we can expect some crackling developments. We can expect answers and research on the following subjects and on many we haven't even thought of yet:

The components of giftedness, and their relationships to drive; emotional status; physical prowess; and especially the areas of art, music, and writing.

Extensive follow-up studies of the gifted into jobs; marriage; community life; relationships with *their* children's schools; and later social, psychological, and economic developments.

The gifted child and his family—his relationships with parents, brothers, sisters, and the larger family group.

Attitude surveys of the gifted child toward teachers, other gifted children, so-called average children, in classroom and outside.

Attitudes toward children with handicaps and those in minority groups.

The gifted in "buddy" relationships, gangs, delinquency.

Giftedness and its relationship to political, educational, social, business, and industrial leadership.

Detailed investigations of the costs involved in providing maximal educational benefits to the gifted.

The under-achieving gifted child and experimental data on what can be done to bring his activities up to expectations.

The teacher of the gifted—personality, preparation, intelligence, abilities, certification requirements.

Longitudinal and comparative studies on special classes, acceleration, enrichment, and special schools, and their effect on the gifted child.

The place of counseling and guidance in the lives of the gifted—what kind, when, by whom.

Problems, satisfactions, needs, attitudes, and understandings that are unique to gifted children, approached on the basis of age and sex.

The personality patterns of the gifted (or don't they fit into patterns?).

The gifted person and studies in prejudice, scapegoats, and minority antagonisms.

The gifted in bilingual cultures, especially Spanish-American and American Indian.

The incidence, circumstances, educational progress, and adult development of gifted children from lower socioeconomic groups.

Relationship of intellectual giftedness and talents.

Progress of the gifted in public and private school settings.

Attitudes toward their social responsibilities.

Attitudes of parents of *other* children toward the gifted, when the gifted child is either their own or in another family.



Relationships of gifted and other children in situations outside the regular classroom—playground, physical education, student government, lunchroom.

Flexible school entry based on giftedness.

The community attitude toward the gifted and the public relations handling of the problem; effectiveness of various public relations approaches.

So if anyone thinks it has all been said or done, that we can now move on to other areas of concern because this one has been amply studied, perhaps he'd better take another look. Business is clearly unfinished on the gifted and it will be attracting Master's and Doctoral candidates in their thesis and dissertation woes for years to come.

### LETTING THE PUBLIC IN ON THE SECRET

You probably noticed that the last item in the list of research needs was based on community attitudes and public relations approaches—its place on the list has nothing at all to do with its importance. It's the *most* important! All that we've written here, all that appears in the newspapers and magazines on this subject, and all of the foundation and other support add up to very little unless a public awareness and awakening follow.

The problem should be obvious: It's hard to dramatize a smart child, especially if he is somebody else's. A movie queen attempts suicide, two cars crack up on your street, an airplane that you might have been on crashes, quintuplets born and all living—sure, the dramatic values are deeply imbedded in the event. But when a little boy sits day after day, month after month, and, heaven forbid, year after year in a barren classroom, until he's 16 and free of it once and for all, that doesn't bother enough of us. If he just quietly sits it out, relatively few will worry, unless somewhere along the line he beats up a little old lady.

We've at least made a significant public relations start by getting material into print, and actually we've accomplished much more than that. With St. Louis, Cleveland, and other cities and towns,

plus all the other organizations and institutions we've referred to earlier, in action up to their necks on the subject, apparently the public relations approach already used is paying dividends.

But as usual, the educational environment is reluctant about borrowing a page from business. Too seldom does it use public relations specialists to make its point on the scale it deserves. The excuse of cost is hardly a palatable one when we have so many who still believe and say, "They're bright—no need to worry about *them!*" And so the loss continues.

If you go to an expert to fix your plumbing or your car, to cut your hair, and to make out your will, then perhaps you'll agree that specialization steps into this picture too. Action plus money will come even faster when all the stops are pulled on the human interest angles of children neglected in the speed of daily living in the 20th century. Repetition will serve the fruitful purposes that a man in central Europe missed by a country mile as he repeated the big lie; we're dinning away at the *truth* of childhood potential and adult capabilities that are too frequently lost in the shuffle.

The experts who write to pull at the heartstrings to raise funds, to make people feel a piece of themselves is involved, these are the fellows we have to hire to get the job done. The "we" consists of parent groups, teacher organizations, and school systems (local and state) who recognize the importance of the job at hand.

The task goes beyond public enlightenment through the printed word and other mass media of television, radio, and motion pictures. The communication lines between home and school; between parent, teacher, and administrator; the special school programs; the acceptance by the school of responsibilities as a key functionary in the community; the recognition by teachers that they are influential and important community participants (and the realization by the *rest* of the people that they are); the importance of civic clubs, businessmen, and labor groups in the total picture—these all fit into the broadest kind of public relations approach.

With these sparks continuing to light a fire of understanding, the

reasons behind the inactivity of some school systems in connection with their gifted children will gradually vanish. The cost of a sound program, the personnel to handle it, the administrative problems in setting it up will no longer have meaning, for the aroused public will have its demands met—or else.

General apathy toward the situation in which most of our gifted still remain will fade away one of these days, but it'll take a major push from all those already in the front line trenches.

### THE NINE-PRONGED AIM

The nine important subjects pulled together in this chapter bring up a little story told by Gracie Fields, the British entertainer.

It is about a fellow who had always wanted to get a job in a circus. One day when the circus came to his town he went down to see the boss.

"I have a wonderful stunt," he said. "Can I do it for you?"

"Okay, okay, but do it fast. I ain't got all day. We open tomorra, y'know.—By the way, what is the stunt?"

"Well," began the applicant hesitantly, "you see that tall ladder over there? Must go at least 100 feet into the air, doesn't it?"

"I guess so," was the disinterested reply.

"Well, I'll climb up to the top, and dive head first into a pail of sand."

For the first time the boss was alive to the possibilities. This was good, very good—if it could be done!

So they measured the pail on the man's head (just to be certain that *all* the odds weren't against him), and he began to climb. A moment's hesitation at the top, and W-H-O-O-S-H, right into the pail, head first.

"Magnificent! Absolutely perfect!" screamed the boss as he helped brush the sand off the man. "Wait right here! Don't move! I want my partner to see that. If he likes it as much as I do, we'll sign you right up to a contract."

"I won't do it for him," the man said quietly.

"But why? It's tremendous!"

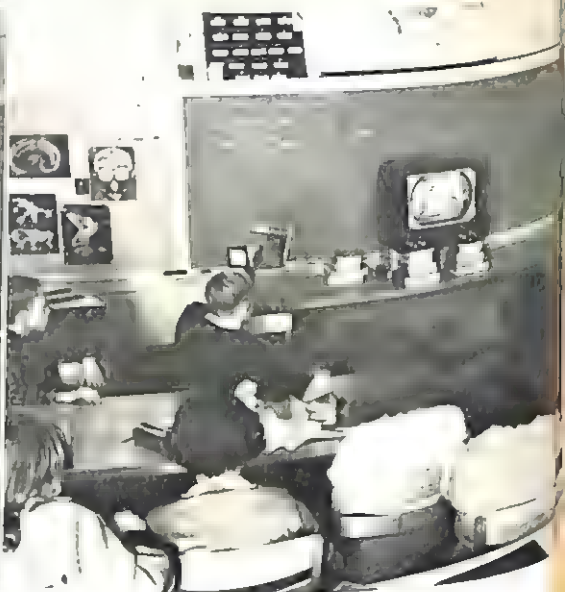
"Well," the man drawled, "it was my first time and it gave me quite a headache."

Our aim at this point wasn't in just one direction, but in nine, all vital to the issue at hand. Although most of them, like nursery schools and the place of guidance, have serious implications for all children, they play an especially vital part in the lives of the gifted. Some, such as the gifted in foreign countries and public relations needs, are largely on uncharted seas but guaranteed a spot of honor in the next decade.

All in all, these nine subjects provide a background for tying together the unfinished business on the gifted as we approach the last lap, the action-sparked look into the near future.







Viewing the future through the media of today's audio-visual aids . . . or leaping toward it on the wings of the physical prowess of our gifted . . . the years ahead belong more abundantly to all of us if each gifted child reaches the vast horizon within his grasp.

*Above, Howard Soule and Edison School, Phoenix; below, Edward Gurr*

# IX

## *A Time for Action*

"THE thing I hate most about an argument," once said G. K. Chesterton, "is that it always interrupts a discussion." In recent months the gifted child has become that kind of controversial subject, being torn apart by kind people who mean well but who sometimes let emotions set the pace for their activities. Because we lack complete understanding we may be *down* on something that we should be *up* on. We may be against special classes, schools, or other individualized attention to the gifted for one very simple reason—we just don't see all sides of the picture.

Anyone who even occasionally reads the women's magazines, education journals, or weekly news publications recognizes how many words have been put into print about gifted children. The articles range from the cute to the critical to the calamitous, from an outlet for the frustrations of a concerned parent to the detailed plan of a scientist or educator.

Before we look at some of the specific proposals for action which have been suggested recently, let us list a few factors which constitute the setting for those proposals.

1. Teachers, administrators, parents and others on the local scene are generally aware of the problem and the seriousness of it. They recognize the need for working together, have already participated in experimental programs, and are ready for research and new approaches. Parent study groups and teacher

in-service programs are two of the many techniques currently in use for securing insights on these children and knowing what to do about them.

2. The current feeling is frequently that any school program for the gifted which grows out of a school system's needs is better than no program at all. There *are* instances, however, where such a conclusion can lead to some ridiculous practices.
3. This subject has both national and international implications. It is tied in with world peace, health, happiness, and understanding among individuals as well as among nations. For those who feel we are shooting too high with such big thoughts, here is an item to ponder over for awhile: It is a minute group (estimated at about 1 percent) of the world's population who are basically responsible for moving the world ahead. The rest of us are just along for the ride. But it's far less of a ride than we are able to get for ourselves as these youngsters continue to drop by the way before reaching the scintillating heights of which many of them are capable.
4. Our current environment is one which unfortunately still does not realize the full importance of education and the way we are depriving ourselves by nonacceptance and perhaps even ridicule of the bright, the educated, and the intellectual. Plenty of evidence exists of our attitude toward education as a whole: Low salaries, buildings before personnel (haven't you heard the gag with bitter undertones of the school administrator who has an "edifice" complex?), more money for cigarettes and liquor than for schools. Hardly the atmosphere conducive to building up respect for our brainiest people; is it?

The ingredients for success are in our schools and communities and the money is available for all other purposes in the world—so why not for this vital need? That's what a lot of folks are asking. But many are going one step further. They have plans. On the following pages are a few of these plans, selected from the dozens currently in print. The first ones aren't exactly exciting, but they

may be useful for certain school systems and communities. Then we will move on to the more provocative ideas.

### SPECIFIC PLANS FOR ACTION

Start where we are, evaluate what we have, and go on from there. That's the theme of a three-article series by Miriam Pritchard which appeared in the most practical magazine in the whole area of exceptional children.<sup>1</sup> Her objective is to involve all interested and available resources in the school and community, vitalizing the program through an all-out plan. If they're interested, they'll be active; and if they're active, they'll produce. A Policies Committee with the function of determining educational needs, defining the gifted, and studying attitudes toward the gifted is to be followed by other group processes for identification, guidance, and parent education. A total school plan set up along these definite lines may be exactly what your school or school system needs. The idea of planning by using all resources and having the final plan related to *your* needs and aims certainly has good possibilities.

"What do we want our gifted to be?" asked Herbert J. Klausmeier.<sup>2</sup> What intellectual achievements, social competence, and moral values do we want them to have? On the basis of such generalized objectives he came up with a series of specific proposals:

1. Develop a systematic, continuous program for the identification and development of any talent any child may possess.
2. Admit all children to kindergarten or first grade at about the same chronological age, giving all of them the opportunity to profit from such attendance, and making certain that as much attention is given to identifying and providing for the potential high achievers as to the physically handicapped, mentally retarded, slow learners, and the average.

3. Place children, throughout the elementary grades, in classes which have both a range and variety of talents, and group within the class

<sup>1</sup> Miriam Pritchard, "Total School Planning for the Gifted," *Exceptional Children*, January, February, March, 1952.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert J. Klausmeier, "The Gifted: What Will They Become?" *Phi Delta Kappan*, December, 1956, pp. 112-116.

- or individualize instruction within the class to meet the needs of all; use partial segregation, but not full segregation because of the factor of living closely with others in the world of the present and the future.
4. Accelerate during the intermediate grades and junior high school through double promotions *only* those potential high achievers whose physical, social, and emotional development is in harmony with their intellectual development.
  5. Encourage the potential high achievers in the high school to complete the usual requirements for four years in three years, or increase the number of subject matter areas and emphasize depth of understanding and skills in the areas which the gifted pursue.
  6. Continue to emphasize general education for citizenship for all youth of high school age, and as the size and resources of the high school allow, offer various curriculum patterns which provide for a degree of specialization for the academically gifted and for those with talents in such areas as visual art, music, dramatics, creative writing, applied arts, and other career areas.
  7. Reexamine the requirements placed upon the high school graduate for being admitted to the various careers attainable through a college education.
  8. Utilize community resources fully; reduce the overload on teachers through community craft programs, YWCA and YMCA classes, museums, art galleries, commercial television, retired professional men, and other sources.
  9. Inform society fully of the loss of the gifted which is occurring at present after high school graduation.

While we may differ with the point of view expressed here on subjects like using the same chronological age for school entry for all as if it were some kind of magic, we can respect these ideas just the same. They can provide a guide for a conscientious school staff to follow. Even though somewhat generalized, at least they constitute a *plan* rather than the will-we-won't-we evasiveness of some school people who are much like Jennie whom Gertrude Lawrence used to sing about so poignantly. Jennie just couldn't make up her mind, and neither can a lot of us when it comes to taking some action as the clock keeps ticking off the precious days, months, and years of a child's most productive learning time.

Educators are constantly evaluating their deficiencies as well as



their accomplishments, but recent years have constituted an open season on the field of teaching. It has become fair game for anyone who has an interest in the subject even though an adequate background and understanding might be conspicuously absent. A lawyer wrote a phenomenally successful book on how reading should be taught,<sup>3</sup> and now a historian comes forth with ideas on gifted children and their education today.<sup>4</sup> Arthur Bestor is on fairly non-controversial ground with the following statements.

What we need is not "enrichment" but a genuine program of education for the able child, constructed from the ground up, based upon the accumulated experience of all great schools of all great countries.

We know from experience that the able student can master mathematics . . . so as to be ready to study the calculus at least by the age of 18 . . . can acquire real mastery of two or three languages besides his own . . . can attain to high fluency and accuracy in the writing of his own language . . . can have read and understood a substantial number of books of considerable difficulty . . . can obtain effective grasp upon the main features of world history and of the history of his own country . . . can acquire a substantial foundation of knowledge in . . . basic areas of science . . . "not at the expense of social or personal adjustment."

But he arouses bitterness and a stone wall of opposition when he lambasts the way our teachers are prepared and the current emphasis on vocational preparation of young people. The "what" and "how" of our elementary and secondary school programs come in for their share of severe criticism from him. Do something about his favorite whipping boys and the gifted child will no longer be forgotten, he implies. Until then, he feels there is little hope on the educational scene, despite the almost superhuman efforts being exerted in many school systems splashed across the entire country, a heartening development of the past ten years which he chooses to ignore. All that we have learned in this century about how children learn and develop are lost in the Bestor rallying cry to

<sup>3</sup> Rudolph Flesch, *Why Johnny Can't Read*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1955.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Bestor, "Educating the Gifted Child," *New Republic*, March 4, 1957, pp. 12-16.

return to days long dead. Only education is subjected to such attacks; you *know* how long they would be sanctioned in fields like engineering, medicine, and dentistry where the new, the experimental, and the progressive are encouraged as symbolic of better days to come.

No one can simplify this problem which demands a multiple approach to its manifold difficulties. But reason and good will are necessary factors; without them the solutions will be an even longer time in coming. Fortunately we have many people who present their ideas in a framework of common sense. Let's move on and look at some of them.

Some of us are reluctant to try something new. We realize the problems that newness brings—exemplified by the man in the following story who learned the hard way that when something different is attempted we'd better be ready to expect anything. He was going for his first streetcar ride, and on the way to the car line he found a wallet with \$4.79 in it. On the streetcar he was amazed that the conductor knew the names of all the people riding. The call of "Jackson" resulted in Mr. Jackson's getting off; he called "Adams" and Mrs. Adams got off. So when "Jefferson" rang through the car the new rider left at the next stop, for that was his name. Just a few moments later he was asked by a stranger, "Is this Jefferson?" and he admitted that he was. "Where is 479?" asked the man—at which point he gave the stranger the wallet and ran home as fast as he could.

Congressional action (more frequently proposed than actually taken) can lead us into new areas of assistance to the gifted that are largely untouched to date. Some means of assistance not covered by pending bills and which offer promise for the future for students where finances are the major stumbling block toward more education are listed below.<sup>5</sup> (We know that key reasons other than finances discourage more schooling, but still, it is an important one.)

<sup>5</sup> Charles A. Quattlebaum, *Federal Aid to Students for Higher Education*, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956, p. 16.

1. Federal appropriations for scholarships to be awarded high school graduates on a state quota basis, the scholarships to be provided through state commissions, and to allow each recipient a free choice of institution of higher education, and of course of study.
2. Federal insurance of loans to students in institutions of higher education.
3. Creation of a federal scholarship fund for loans to students selected by state agencies.
4. Provision of federal scholarships to increase the number of trained personnel in one or more of the health professions.
5. Establishment of a system of federal scholarships for persons of unusual ability in engineering, physics, chemistry, and closely related sciences.
6. Establishment of a foreign service scholarship training program, and of a foreign service academy comparable to the military and naval academies.

In Chapter VI we quoted Dr. Glenn Seaborg, Nobel prize chemist, who felt that a national system of scholarships was our only course for getting more of our capable students into college. In order to develop new sources of power, fuels, and new products, he stated: "We shall require all the assistance we can get from trained brainpower—from the scientist, the engineer, the lawyer, the industrial executive, the economist, the social scientist, the statesman and many others."<sup>6</sup> With more and better prepared brainpower "we may look forward to many wonders in the next 50 years," he added. Those of us who have grown up in an era that has produced super-speed planes, television, and guided missiles (to say nothing of the miracles of electric lights, automobiles, and the telephone) can see the reasonableness of his predictions of space travel to the moon; TV-telephone communication; air travel anywhere in the world in a few hours; and greater control over disease, mental health, crime, and delinquency.

They will come, all right, but with a little push from the gifted adults of tomorrow they may arrive in time for most of us to enjoy them.

<sup>6</sup> Associated Press dispatch, December 28, 1956.

Dr. Seaborg isn't alone in his suggestions of national scholarships; he has support from some men who have votes where they count. Carl Elliott (Alabama) of the U.S. House of Representatives firmed up a bill<sup>7</sup> which so far hasn't mustered the backing needed. He points out that federal scholarships to West Point have been given for 150 years and to the Naval Academy for 100 years, and that we've had newer, small scholarship programs for the Departments of State and Defense; Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Veterans Administration; Atomic Energy Commission; and the National Science Foundation. His bill covered scholarships and student loans to start at \$32 million annually, and increasing by that amount each year until \$128 million is reached. The awards would be to high school students on the basis of need and ability, with no discrimination regarding sex, race, or creed, and with the stipulation that in case of emergency at least 50 percent of the money could be awarded to fields determined by the President to be related to national defense.

Yes, those figures do sound high, but *one* discovery by *one* person may be just the missing link we need in solving the mystery of cancer. And imagine the *thousands* who would be encouraged to complete college who might otherwise have found their brightness submerged like the great bulk of an iceberg, buried deep down where it cannot be seen, used, or developed.

As you may expect, the type of proposal offered by Representative Elliott attains its widest publicity in the areas of engineering and science, two fields among *many* where it is vitally needed. Just as necessary is the help required to prepare men and women of peace in political science, of language in the fields of semantics and the world's major foreign languages, and of human motivations in the area of psychology.

In pointing up the necessity of a national program, James R. Killian, Jr., President of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is a

<sup>7</sup> Educational Records Bureau and American Council on Education, *Selection and Guidance of Gifted Students for National Survival*, Washington, D.C., American Council on Education, 1956, pp. 53-62.



forceful spokesman for the scientists and engineers.<sup>8</sup> His plan is four-fold:

1. Set up several thousand more scholarships to help the gifted who need them in order to go to college. If private funds cannot be found, then short-term (5-year) federally financed aid should be provided. He insists that the annual college, corporation, state, and foundation funds of 50 to 60 millions should be doubled in two or three years and quadrupled in five years. His goal is 9000 annual 4-year scholarships, 3000 in science and engineering, 3000 not designated in advance, and 3000 for those who had been capable of completing part of their college work while still in high school, the latter idea based on a proposal of the Science Advisory Committee of the Office of Defense Mobilization.
  2. Revitalize the teaching of science and mathematics in secondary schools—new goals, new courses, fresh experiments, imaginative demonstrations, professional film shorts. (And incidentally, these two academic fields are certainly not the only ones in need of a lively, exciting approach in many schools. This one suggestion by itself could do more than perhaps any other single idea to encourage young people to continue their education and entice many of them toward the teaching field itself which is so parched and thirsty for them.)
  3. Set up a national forum similar to the 1955 White House Conference on Education to throw the spotlight of ideas and publicity on how we can educate more and better scientists and engineers. One of the following two committees recently appointed by the President could sponsor the meetings: Education Beyond the High School; Development of Scientists and Engineers.
  4. Formulate the outlines of a grand strategy for maintaining our technological advance in the United States.
- Think, plan, and dream big—that is the theme of President Killian and many others. The tiny, mousy words of the let's-take-
- <sup>8</sup> *Life*, May 7, 1956, pp. 147-48, 150.



it-slowly-because-we-might-make-a-mistake boys have been listened to for too long, and now the "idea men" can take over.

In the magnitude of their suggestions they are much like the energetic ant who lived in a sand trap on a golf course and managed to survive a half dozen frantic swings of a poor golfer. Finally he whispered to his one remaining companion, "If we expect to get out of here alive, we'd better get on the ball!"

The three special proposals that follow are singled out as symbols of "the big dream." They deserve the careful consideration of the interested and concerned parent and teacher. And maybe they will pique your interest enough to lead into channels of action.

### THREE BIG PLANS

A scientist who is also an editor and writer (*and* a very persuasive speaker); a group of level-headed school people who are ready to shake off the shackles which confine us to what *has* been rather than what *might* be; a naval officer whose primary duty at present is with the United States Atomic Energy Commission—from these three varied sources have come ideas that display exciting promise for gifted children during the remainder of this century.

Dreamers? Maybe they are. But don't you remember a thrilling British movie of a few years back called *Thunder Rock*, starring Michael Redgrave? In a fantasy-like atmosphere appeared a number of characters who had left their own countries in secrecy and disgrace; history showed that all had been forerunners of great discoveries and inventions, but were ridiculed in their own time. Eras overlap into each other so rapidly these days that we are much more likely to accept the new idea now rather than wait until a distant tomorrow heaps praise on it. We are more ready to move on because we already know how possible the improbable can become within a matter of months or years rather than decades and centuries. It's all part of our 20th century speed-up.

In a brilliant, readable little book,<sup>9</sup> Paul Brandwein nails down

<sup>9</sup> Paul F. Brandwein, *The Gifted Student as Future Scientist*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955.

the problem in specific terms—less than half of the most able reach college; only half who enter college are graduated; most school programs aim at the average; some socioeconomically low families don't consider college for their youngsters; not early enough identification of the bright; teaching salaries too low to attract as many teachers as are needed to motivate and guide. Then he goes on with his proposal.

It is based on our "grave need for a total nationally organized effort" and a "look into the possible development of national, state, and school organizations acting in collaboration."<sup>10</sup> He proposes three "tracks" or lines of development:

*Track I—Public Schools.* The National Science Foundation, or another national organization, could provide services such as acting as a clearinghouse for information, supporting research, publicizing successful procedures, and organizing "task forces" of experts who could be consultants for school systems that ask for them. The latter groups would demonstrate practices which are effective with gifted children. While Mr. Brandwein's emphasis is on science, his suggestions are certainly applicable to all academic areas.

His second suggestion for assistance to public schools is the establishment in each State Department of Education of a position with the primary responsibility for solving the problem of identifying, selecting, and improving the education of children of high ability. While many State Departments of Education do have persons responsible for working in *all* areas of exceptional children, concentration on the gifted has not yet developed.

He further suggests that each city with a population of more than 200,000 have a similar position set up, and each elementary, junior high, and high school assign an individual to be a consultant for teachers who have gifted children in their classes. Other categories of exceptional children, such as the blind, have a school "resource person" assigned to work with teachers who have these youngsters in their classes. The precedent has been set so that this procedure also could be followed for bright children in many school systems.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

*Track II—Colleges.* The national organization mentioned above would help coördinate activities related to colleges. It would work with these three individuals or groups: (A) A person in some organization like the College Entrance Examination Board, who is especially equipped to advise and guide colleges in identifying and selecting bright students; (B) a person assigned within the college who has special preparation in identification, selection, and improvement of methods of teaching, with the specific function of articulating or relating more closely the high school programs with the freshman year in college; (C) an industrial board with representation from the college and personnel management in industry, to support research related to identifying the gifted and to provide scholarships.

*Track III—Teachers' Organizations.* Again the national organization mentioned earlier steps into the picture to coördinate activities of these groups: (A) National teacher and student organizations which do not duplicate efforts, and which could exchange procedures at meetings and provide publications of practical ideas (areas such as art, music, science, and health could be used); or now existing professional organizations of teachers and student groups like the Future Farmers of America, Future Scientists of America, and others; (B) a regional, state, or city committee to work with the national setup; (C) an industrial board to provide funds and projects for research, publications, and consultants.

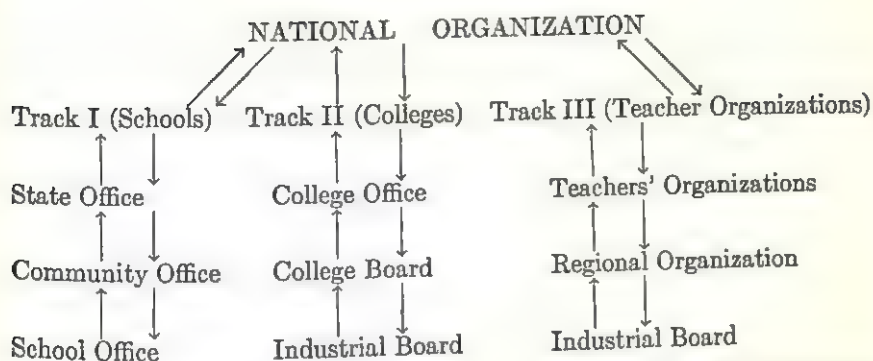
Since industry can gain most from all these efforts Mr. Brandwein sees no reason for reluctance on its part to participate.

The structure he proposes is diagrammed on page 239.

Mr. Brandwein concludes:

This plan is offered without presumption. Probably it is naïve. But there are able people in this country who have the organizational ability, the energy, and the will to set up workable organizations if the one above is wanting—as it must be.

We can no longer afford the luxury of unorganized effort. These are critical, even perilous, years. A reading of history has shown that there have never been enough people with high level ability. It is clear we are not doing our best for our boys and girls of such ability.



It is high time our intelligence and good will were directed toward the conservation of our human resources.<sup>11</sup>

The second of our three big plans comes from Orange County, California where a group in the County Schools office decided that the way to clear our minds of the debris of practice, routine, accepted ideas, and repeated experiences is to "brain-storm." You've heard the phrase. Maybe you've tried it on a problem. The approach is to remove all restrictions, divorce ourselves from the structured patterns of school offerings, get away from stereotypes, and eliminate tradition, what is, and what has been.

The setting they suggest for "brain-storming on the gifted" is something like this:

If you had all the money, coöperation, time, and talent you wanted, what would you do for gifted children? What plan would you devise?

Once when they tried this out they came up with some fascinating ideas. For example, no matter how rich an environment they tried to provide (in writing) for selected gifted children, the *total* cost remained less than it is for *two jet bombers!* The program they devised was based on individual teaching, travel, skilled teaching personnel every step of the way, educational television, and a wealth of books, equipment, and other materials.

Some necessary ingredients of the Orange County dream are:

1. A national approach because of the scope of the problem.
2. Qualified personnel regardless of academic credentials.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.



3. Salaries to match those of business executives rather than those of industrial underlings.
4. A departure from the traditional school programs to which so many of us subscribe merely because it is what we have.

But does the dream have details? Yes, it does, and the chart on the next page shows in what detail the plan has been worked out. Obviously it calls for folks who recognize the magnitude of the problem and who are willing to shake themselves loose in order to expand into the free-thinking atmosphere these ideas demand.

While this chart represents the kind of thinking that can evolve from one group of educated doers in southern California, what can come from your community, your parents, teachers, and administrators? Relax and fall into the swing of it, the Orange County people suggest. You might be surprised at how much you can learn and plan when you take off the lid.

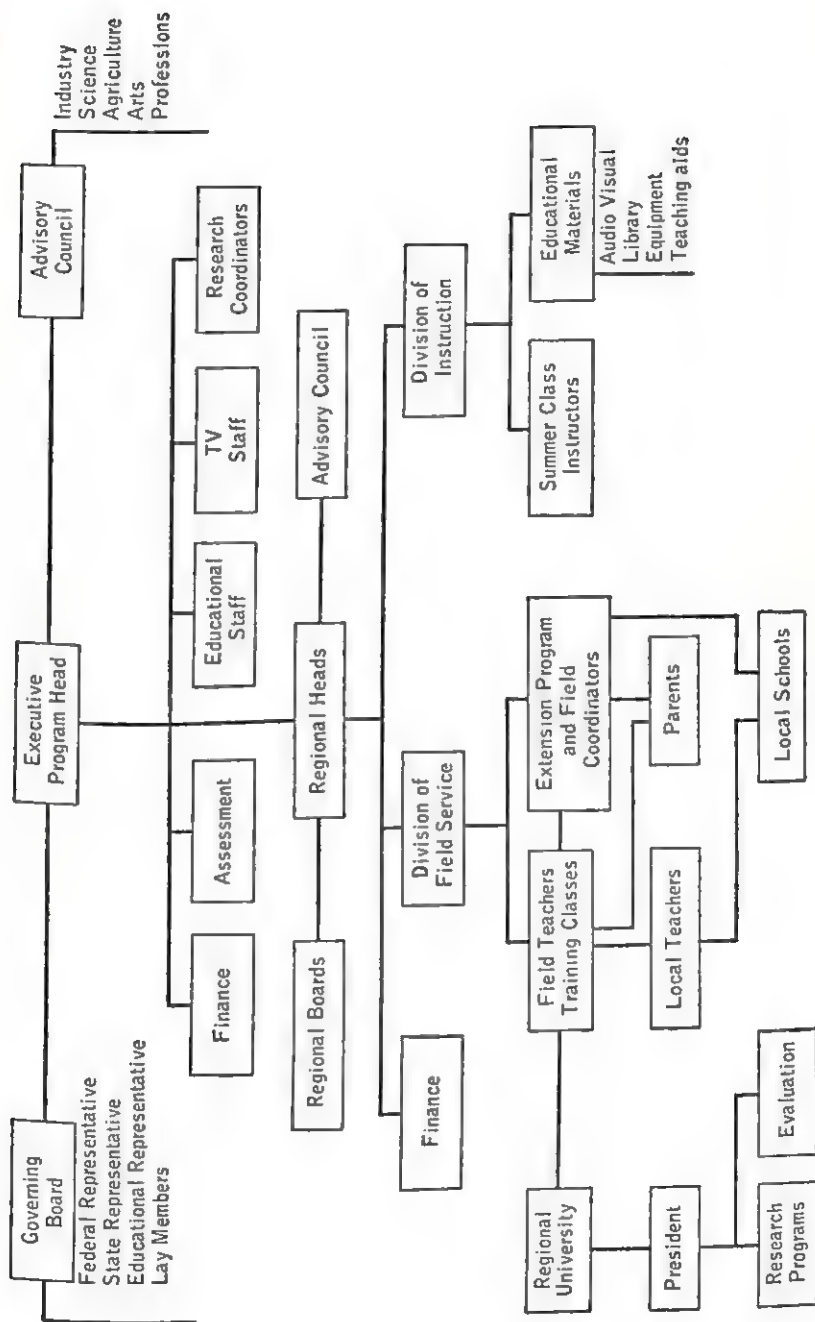
Somebody in the group may needle in this way: "Don't some of our finest literature, songs, and pictures come from turmoil and deprivation of childhood? Wouldn't we be eliminating much of it if the atmosphere we provided were optimal in every way?" A provocative idea, worthy of being tossed into the "brain-storming" caldron.

From the speeches and articles of a navy man has come the clearest exposition of a future plan for the gifted that has so far hit the printed page. That is no little achievement, considering the hundreds of articles and booklets on the subject in just the past few years. Rear Admiral H. G. Rickover has stated his ideas in three major papers.<sup>12</sup>

The Admiral starts swinging by quoting from hearings of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy of the Congress: "... a shocking

<sup>12</sup> Rear Admiral H. G. Rickover, USN, Chief, Naval Reactors Branch, Division of Reactor Development, U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, "Let's Stop Wasting Our Greatest Resource," *The Saturday Evening Post*, March 2, 1957, pp. 19, 108-109, 111. Speech, Thomas Alva Edison Foundation Institute, Hotel Suburban, East Orange, New Jersey, November 20, 1956. Speech, Thomas Alva Edison Foundation Institute, Hotel Suburban, East Orange, New Jersey, November 22, 1955.





indictment of America's indifference toward one of the most serious problems facing this nation . . . a graphic picture of what America stands to lose in future years if we do not immediately initiate vigorous corrective measures."

He, just like Paul Brandwein and many others who constitute the relatively few fully enlightened ones, cannot remain indifferent or quiet as he stands in awe of comparisons such as these: For every high school graduate who earns a doctoral degree there are 50 who have the required capacity but do not; we are spending twice as much for recreation as we are for education; we spend more for comic books than for textbooks.

Admiral Rickover recognizes how limited are the concrete measures that already have been taken. He feels their inadequacy is due to programs frequently set up for only the extremely gifted (135 IQ and over) but not for the more numerous group in the 115-135 IQ range. He also criticizes the narrow viewpoint that restricts our solutions to the existing school systems instead of breathing deeply of the expansive ideas that can come from Orange County personnel and others like them.

Even if his ideas do not coincide with yours, give them a faithful hearing, for they come from a man who has devoted much thought to the subject. He obviously regrets that his country suffers such an unnecessary loss of its finest youth, and his suggestions represent the specific recommendations which he feels can rectify the foolish mistakes of past generations. Here they are, in brief:

1. We shall not do justice to our talented youth until we seek them out at an early age—no later than ten or eleven—and educate them separately from the rest of the children. This need not necessarily be in a separate school; it could be in a college preparatory section of the school. But this separate schooling must begin earlier than junior high school. It should start after the fourth grade or, at the latest, the fifth grade.

2. If possible, the school year should be extended to 210 days. There is no other country of comparable civilization where children go to school for only 180 days as they do here. This may have made sense when we were an agricultural country and children were needed to help on the farm. But our long vacations make no sense today, especially

when we consider how rapidly knowledge is increasing and how much more a child must now learn to become truly educated.

3. Fourteen years is a long enough time to provide a good liberal arts grounding. Professional postgraduate study ought not to begin later than the age of 20, and brilliant children should be permitted to begin a year or so sooner. . . . Ample evidence shows that, as far as mental ability is concerned, talented children ought to be from two to three years ahead of the average.

4. . . . industry make available its scientists and engineers for one-year periods to teach in our high schools—in this way helping to relieve the teacher shortage . . . industry, together with our educational foundations, undertake the setting up of model academic secondary schools in perhaps 25 different centers in the United States. . . . Teachers' salaries in these schools would be . . . equal to those paid for comparable positions in industry. . . . These model schools would aim at a ratio of at least one teacher for every 20 pupils. . . . Teachers in these schools would be given no extracurricular work of any kind, because a teacher, as does any professional person, requires time for thought and study. . . . I estimate that the cost of operating each model school for a period of five years will be about ten million dollars. At the end of that period the community ought to have an option to take over the school, provided it agrees to continue the high scholastic standards set under private management. These model schools would demonstrate what could be accomplished by competent teachers, a proper curriculum and an adequate school year. They would be goals and living examples of what can be done by the community for its talented children.

We seem to be more concerned with our children's clothes and entertainment than with the training of their minds, Admiral Rickover points out. He goes on to say:

Not yet won is the mass support necessary to bring about truly effective measures by legislative bodies, from which must come the necessary regulations and financial contributions to upgrade the schooling of talented youth. We are still in the early stages of isolated studies, tentative experiments in a few localities, and long-drawn arguments pro and con. More important, American public thinking has not yet connected shortages of trained manpower with inadequate provision for the proper education of the talented. Nor are we sufficiently aware that, in the final analysis, our cherished American standard of living is largely dependent on the work of a very small group of skilled professionals.

While many of us who are not in that category dislike the use of the phrase "indispensable men," the Admiral forcefully presents the fact that whether we like it or not we *do* have indispensable men and no society can function without them. We are quick to recognize superiority in athletics and the arts, but intellectual capability is something that it isn't quite nice to accept in a democracy.

"Special schooling for the mentally superior will be branded as 'undemocratic' and as 'class' education," he stated.

It will be considered "unfair" to give the talented child education superior to that offered the average. It will be said that the separation of children according to mental capacity will deny them valuable experience in living together with other children of varied background and ability, and that this constitutes an important ingredient in the smooth functioning of American democracy—so it will be said. None of these objections, however, bear critical examination.

It would, indeed, be "undemocratic" to propose a cleavage along class lines, but not one along the lines of natural ability, which hardly anyone will claim is limited to the children coming from better homes. It is, however, often forgotten that we already have just such a separation along class lines in large American cities where schools draw their pupils from a particular neighborhood rather than from the whole population, as is the case in smaller towns. Neighborhoods in America are usually homogeneous, at least as far as finances of families are concerned. Parents in better class neighborhoods generally succeed in obtaining better schools for their children.

On this same point one of the other recognized leaders in this field wrote recently: "So long as this democracy selects youth for special programs or provisions on the basis of ability and not class, color, religion, or ethnic origin; so long as it does not contribute to the self-perpetuation of a single group; and so long as it is open to public scrutiny and censure, it need not fear that its concern for the gifted will give rise to an elite."<sup>13</sup>

Admiral Rickover ties his proposals in a neat little package with these comments aimed directly at the solar plexus of the "practical man":

<sup>13</sup> A. Harry Passow, "The Comprehensive High School and Gifted Youth," *Teachers College Record*, December, 1956, p. 152.

Is money the problem? Then what are we going to do with all our wealth? If an additional four billion dollars a year—one per cent of our gross national product—makes the difference between good teachers and mediocre ones, good schools and poor ones, can we afford not to spend that sum? Is our end aim merely to become more wealthy, to acquire more things?

Let us make a start. Let us devise a way to make our schools as good as, and even better than, those of any other country. We have the ability to do this. We are rich enough to do this. All we need is the will to do it and to recognize that "the inevitable comes to pass through effort."

So there you have the major elements of three sparkling plans, from three sources who recognize our needs and do not run in the opposite direction at the thought of a departure from the *status quo*. Fortunately they are not alone, but act as spokesmen for the forward echelon on this quiet battleground where a new dawn is signaling a time for action.

### ON YOUR MARK, GET SET—!

Pritchard, Klausmeier, Bestor, Quattlebaum, Seaborg, Elliott, Kilian, Brandwein, Orange County, Rickover—billions of dollars of brain power have concentrated on the loss of our gifted children and what we should do about it.

Now let's attempt to pull the threads together in a single plan that could be put into effect before each of us is even a year older.

Although we need immediate attention to the gifted child on all educational levels, where should we begin? If one level were to be chosen (and that choice certainly does not preclude activity on other levels as well), it is the *secondary school* that is crying for help most desperately. Nursery schools in general give the most complete individualized attention based on a child's need; elementary schools have made the start as changing practices in school systems all over the country testify; colleges are the slowest to change and will do so only if the institutions that feed into them pave the way. Thus, by a simple process of elimination the secondary school becomes



the obvious focal point for special and immediate treatment. Besides, these are the students whose needs we must hurry to meet before we have lost them for good.

Here is a six-fold plan for getting the job done:

1. Industry is feeling the pinch of the shortage of skilled personnel—and that means that industry is going to have to make some immediate sacrifices in order to reap long-range personnel benefits. If they fail to recognize their needs and responsibilities, they will hobble along with staffs limited in the vital skill areas. If they agree, the sacrifice they must make is to *loan some of their key personnel temporarily to the secondary schools*. Not on a part-time, half-hearted basis either. Future scientists and engineers will come through our public secondary schools, and it is there that we need these experts at once. They should be paid a salary equivalent to their current earnings, plus a bonus for permitting this shift to be made. (The financial aspect will be explained a little later on.) They will be selected carefully and assigned just as cautiously to high schools set up in accordance with a well-organized plan. At present there are skilled men and women in industry who would like to teach but can't afford to give up their incomes. Many do what one man did whose story was publicized recently: He waited until retirement when his \$25,000 a year was cut down to a retirement level, and he now bolsters his present income with a teaching salary starting at \$4000 a year. But we can't afford to wait until enough skilled persons retire, and they unfortunately have too short a time to contribute anyway. Anyone who argues with a high salary scale for well-qualified teachers ought to know that the USSR's outstanding college professors earn the equivalent of the annual salary of an American industrial corporation president. Suggestions of this type have been made by Admiral Rickover and others, and were arrived at independently just as you would expect they would be. It's such an obvious idea—the

areas with the greatest need being asked to make a temporary sacrifice to eliminate that need.

2. In order to become teachers, these men and women will need some skill in the teaching field, but their preparation will have to be speeded up, condensed, and adapted to their individual abilities. Here's how it would be done: A year of intensive teacher training; six months of it devoted to theory and six months to observation, participation, and student teaching. The universities and teachers under whom they prepare must be carefully chosen, and so must the schools where their student teaching is done. Only the careful selection of these skilled persons in the first place will make a year sufficient time, for teacher preparation ordinarily takes longer than that. During this year their salaries should be the same as they were in industry, plus the bonus, and as they will also be later on the teaching job.

It is assumed that these skilled additions to the teaching profession will increase the availability of teachers who are *bright*. Many thousands now teaching *are* intelligent, of course, but still, relatively few of our teacher preparation institutions use lack of intelligence as a basis for screening applicants out of teaching. It is by chance that gifted teachers sometimes teach our children. We can no longer leave the assignment of the teachers our gifted children receive to chance. It won't be coincidence if a multideveloped hydrogen bomb drops near State and Madison in Chicago and instantaneously snarls our entire national communication system. And no more can we trust to luck in getting together our best teachers and bright children. We must have the most intelligent as well as the most talented, and we need them now.

3. In each city of more than 100,000 a high school should be designated for gifted students who are to be admitted on the basis of standardized achievement and intelligence tests administered on the eighth grade level, by an impartial, pro-

fessional group. These separate high schools will help meet our national need, especially if manned by the finest teachers we now have plus this task force loaned by industry from their most skilled personnel. All of our gifted children are, of course, not in the cities of over 100,000. But if we use one estimate of 600,000 moderately or highly gifted children in the United States,<sup>14</sup> we can assume that half of them are in cities of more than 100,000 or in areas where a school consolidation could result in setting up one of these special schools. Provisions could no doubt be made for many thousands of the others.

These young people have all the best attributes of American youth, and for that reason their high schools must be well-rounded, including in addition to a superior academic program, a fully developed athletic and activity schedule in all of the major extracurricular directions. These schools will not be for "grinds," but for our finest youth and set up in accordance with their desires and needs as well as the needs of a country that has neglected them. It may be a surprise to some, but not to most educators, how closely the national and individual hopes and aspirations will coincide.

Abundant evidence already exists of the academic superiority attained on the university level by students who have completed work in special public high schools now existing for bright youngsters. Graduates of the special schools in New York City provide vivid examples of the fact that selective high school programs pay rich dividends to the individuals involved and to their communities.

High schools distinguished by intelligence of both their staffs and student bodies are not totally radical departures. While they haven't made much of a splash educationally on the national scene, their contributions toward gifted adolescents have been impressive. Most of them have been concentrated in the East: for example, the Bronx High School of Science

<sup>14</sup> Paul Witty (ed.), *The Gifted Child*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Co., 1951, Ch. 10.

(its median IQ is around 130), Stuyvesant High in New York (median IQ of 122), Hunter College High School for Girls (IQ range of 120 to 165), Central High, Philadelphia (IQ usually over 110), Phillips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts (average IQ of 126), and others in Evanston, Oak Park, Scarsdale, and Boston.

4. With precise organizing, this master plan on the secondary school level can be put into operation all over the country at the same moment. We're big and smart, and we've handled matters of this magnitude before. It is on that scale that this proposal must be thought of, a mobilization of all our educational and industrial brains to save our future for many more free generations and to make living and working in this country the finest for all of us of which we are capable. These proposals, when put into practice, will demonstrate to us and to the world that we mean what we say about our respect for each individual.
5. As soon as this plan is in operation, another step must be taken—setting up a national university, with branches in various parts of the country, where our best qualified young people from these high schools can be prepared for their life work in the broadest sense possible. We must recognize at the start that they are capable of far more than many of the lesser qualified institutions of higher learning, and the instructors in them, are now providing for them. If Russian education can give six years of biology, five years of physics, four years of chemistry, and four years of mathematics, ours can provide the equivalent—and, *in addition* develop a broad background in the social sciences and other areas they slight; plus the maintenance of academic freedom (it's absent from their thinking), a lesser emphasis on rote memory, and the continued use of classroom discussion and exchange of ideas, an important ingredient of American education which we want to retain.

The precedent has been set by the Army, Navy, and Air



Force. Our need in the direction of gifted youth is urgent enough for us to give it the same kind of recognition; less vital projects have been easily substantiated in the name of national defense or national welfare. An "Academy for the Gifted"—especially if consolidated with the plan outlined above for the secondary school level—can give more of a spurt to our economic, social, and scientific attainments than even the unbelievably prosperous postwar years have brought. As in the special new high schools mentioned above, much of the university's teaching personnel would come from industry in accordance with the loan plan.

6. The last proposal is for a nonpartisan committee of men and women of good will, from industry and education, to be established on a national basis by Presidential appointment. Their task will be to draw up a blueprint for the education of gifted youth in our country, making full use of the experts who have conducted studies and research in this field for many years. It is assumed that committee members will give their efforts to this work on a full-time basis, and will pursue their objective without a time limit, since the persons chosen will no doubt be of such high caliber that their devotion to the task will guide their efforts.

The financial structure of this plan will demand special consideration early in the deliberations of the proposed committee. Essentially it should derive a significant part of its support from the industrial scene that stands to gain from it. Industry, through its foundations, grants, and other contributions, has already demonstrated its overwhelming interest in the general welfare.

That industry cannot bear the financial burden alone is obvious. We all have to get into the picture, as we do on road expenses (even if we do not drive) and in school support (even if we have no children). In land-grant colleges, the GI Bill, and numerous other ways, the federal government has already entered the education scene, with no taint of federal control implied or real. Here is another opportunity for the financial support to come where it is needed, and again without federal control.



Each high school set up through the plan outlined here would be under the direct control of the community where it is located, and would be administered as part of that system. Since most of our larger cities already have special schools (vocational and for crippled children, for example), this would be one more to add to their rolls, and one which should be a constant source of pride for the community.

The state, too, must give some financial assistance, but the chances are that it would cost the state no more than it would if the students were in regular schools. The additional aid from industry and the federal government would go a long way toward the larger salaries, smaller classes, and needed equipment and facilities. The overall plan would help the other schools by reducing the size of their classes and the loads of their teachers from the back-breaking five or six classes a day, plus study halls, home-rooms, clubs, and other responsibilities.

Through a national plan (this one or others which might evolve from it) beyond the pale of political party or regional jealousy, plus an intensified campaign to continue the efforts so plentifully started in some local communities, we can begin to realize the advantages to all of us as we give more than lip service to the idea of education for all in accordance with their ability to profit from that opportunity.

### A FEW WORDS IN CLOSING

We started this book in a pensive mood. Now that the facts have all been assembled, the ideas expressed and explored, and the specific suggestions made, it is again time for quiet thoughtfulness.

It is also time for an aside to the gifted, but not merely in terms of what is expected of their creative talents in solving the problems within the narrow confines of their neighborhood and on the broad stage of the universe. The magnitude of *that* responsibility *could* be enough to stupefy the most brilliant extrovert into permanent inactivity! Besides, it has been a consistent undercurrent of much of our thinking up to this point.

Those of us who fully recognize the seriousness of the problem hope you youngsters will bear with us in our efforts to seek answers. Many of your teachers and administrators have become alerted to your needs in the past year or two—but *before* you mention it, yes, there *are* plenty of others who prefer to teach as they were taught and who resent the brighter child who poses a threat to their faulty kind of authority.

Some wise people have stated the case for you in picturesque language. For example, one publication had this to say:

Certainly gifted children and youth should not be given an exaggerated notion of the importance of their giftedness. Some may need to be reminded that intellectual superiority is not to be equated with moral superiority. If a gifted student does appear to be developing a disagreeable sense of superiority, he needs counsel regarding his responsibility for social well-being. When he fully recognizes this and also recognizes the sad plight of society today, the job to be done and his responsibility for helping to do this job should make him exceedingly modest instead of disagreeably superior.<sup>15</sup>

A poet, Charlotte Augusta Perry, put it this way:

If you have gifts and I have none,  
If I have shade and you have sun,  
'Tis yours with freer hand to give,  
'Tis yours with truer grace to live,  
Than I, who giftless, sunless stand  
With barren life and hand.<sup>16</sup>

But even closer to the point is the comment of Don Herold that "the brighter you are, the more you have to learn," and the basically true statement of James Russell Lowell which recognizes that we are more alike than we are different: "Whatever you may be sure of, be sure of this, that you are dreadfully like other people."

A brilliant man whose service and modesty would probably

<sup>15</sup> Educational Policies Commission, *Education of the Gifted*, Washington, D.C., National Education Association and American Association of School Administrators, 1950, pp. 69-70.

<sup>16</sup> From Charlotte Augusta Perry, *Carlotta Perry's Poems*, Belford, Clarke & Co., 1888.

eclipse that of any other person in our era has words of deep wisdom to share with gifted youth. Albert Schweitzer asks for no more than he himself has already contributed through his outstandingly productive life:

Whatever you have received more than others in health, in talents, in ability, in success, in a pleasant childhood, in harmonious conditions of home life, all this you must not take to yourself as a matter of course. You must pay a price for it. You must render in return an unusually great sacrifice of your life for other lives.

The final aside must be to the parents and others who live and work with these young people. Our responsibilities rest heavily on us in the realms of exploitation as well as neglect. While we want action quickly the lighter touch, with emotion removed, may ultimately get the job done more satisfactorily.

If we forget all else and emphasize what is best for these children, our goals will be reached. Lest we get bogged down in our own futures, we'd better be certain to keep our eyes firmly on the core of the situation and on the target.

In the deepest sense of which each of us is capable our children represent the ultimate in beauty and satisfaction. What we do for them we do unselfishly because they are the hope and the dream of our tomorrows. Many of us have read the lines that follow—sometimes in our own adolescence when the words failed to have the meaning that they now possess as we yearn so much for the best of which our homes and schools are capable for all of our children:

Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you,  
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot  
visit, not even in your dreams.  
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward, nor tarries with yesterday.  
You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are  
sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and

He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.  
Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as he loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the  
bow that is stable.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Reprinted from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran with permission of the publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1923 by Kahlil Gibran; renewal copyright 1951 by Administrators C.T.A. of Kahlil Gibran Estate, and Mary G. Gibran.

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For various groups studying exceptional children (parents, parent-teacher organizations, college graduate and undergraduate classes, teachers in in-service training programs and others) this book attempts to provide guidance through suggested outlines and topics, selected articles, and extensive bibliographies. Gifted children constitute one of the areas included.

Arizona State College, *The Exceptional Child and His Parents*, The College, Tempe, 1957.

Each summer since 1954 Arizona State College, Tempe, has offered a workshop covering all areas of exceptional children, directed by the author of this book. The workshop participants have prepared a book summarizing their activities; the group studying gifted children has always been one of the largest and most active—and their materials include many sections of value to parents, teachers, and administrators.

Baker, Harry J., *Introduction to Exceptional Children*, Macmillan Company, 1953.

Chapter XVIII, on the mentally gifted, includes sections on definitions, characteristics, causes and backgrounds, history, programs, the Terman Study, and conservation of talent.

Brandwein, Paul F., *The Gifted Student as Future Scientist*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955.

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California Elementary School Administrators' Association, *The Gifted Child in the Elementary School*, The Association, 1954, 26th Yearbook.

Most of this yearbook is devoted to educational programs in California for the gifted, written by people directly involved in them.

Connecticut State Department of Education, *Education for Gifted Children and Youth*, The Department, 1956.

This pamphlet is the result of a consolidated effort of the eight northeastern states, and goes into detail on subjects like these: Identification of the gifted, enriching experiences, special classes and groups, acceleration, and the roles of lay and professional people.

Cruickshank, William M. (ed.), *Psychology of Exceptional Children and Youth*, Prentice-Hall, 1955.

Chapter 10 on the gifted child and youth by Ruth Strang discusses several pertinent topics: How does environment help or hinder; how do gifted children learn; what motivates them; aspects of the dynamics of their development.

Cutts, Norma E., and Moseley, Nicholas, *Teaching the Bright and Gifted*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957.

In a particularly readable, recent contribution the authors amplify their earlier book (*Bright Children*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1953) which was aimed primarily at parents. This one puts more emphasis on school programs and is therefore of even more value to the teacher.

Dade County Public Schools, *Teaching the Talented*, Dade County Public Schools, Florida, 1956.

The purpose of this report is to describe the experimental studies and procedures now being attempted in these schools. Both elementary and secondary school levels are involved.

DeHaan, Robert F., and Havighurst, Robert J., *Educating Gifted Children*, The University of Chicago Press, 1957.

This new book provides a fresh, thought-provoking approach, especially for the teacher and administrator.

Educational Leadership, "Curriculum and the Gifted," January, 1956.

The theme of the gifted is carried through this issue of the pro-

professional journal of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. A number of articles consider problems of teaching the gifted from many directions.

Educational Policies Commission, *Education of the Gifted*, National Education Association, 1950.

An analysis is given of gifted children on the elementary, secondary, and college levels, indicating the great waste, need for educational opportunities regardless of socioeconomic status, and the responsibility of society.

Educational Policies Commission, *Manpower and Education*, National Education Association, 1956.

In Chapter 7 on educating the gifted, topics such as the following are discussed: Educated talent in a democratic society, longer education for the gifted, appropriate education, guidance, increasing educational opportunities.

Frampton, Merle E., and Gall, Elena D. (eds.), *Special Education for the Exceptional*, Porter Sargent, 1956.

The third volume of this three-volume series includes several significant articles on the subject of gifted children. The entire series attempts to cover all areas of exceptional children by selected excerpts and articles from the literature.

Fund for the Advancement of Education, *Bridging the Gap between School and College*, The Fund, 1953. (Second Report, 1957.)

This progress report on four related projects goes into subjects like admission to college with advanced standing, early admission to college, and the important topic of closer articulation of high school and college programs.

Garrison, Karl C., *The Psychology of Exceptional Children*, Ronald Press, 1950.

Part IV includes these sections: Characteristics of the mentally gifted, psychology of special abilities, school provisions for the gifted, and personal and social development of the gifted.

Goddard, Henry H., *School Training of Gifted Children*, World Book Company, 1928.

Although the book is an old one, it is well worth reading because of the case it builds up for special classes for the gifted and its discussion of such classes in actual operation.

Gowan, John Curtis, and Gowan, May Seagoe, *An Annotated Bibliography of Writings on the Education of the Gifted Child*, The Authors, Los Angeles State College, 1956.

This lengthy compilation (plus the list in the March, 1955 issue of

the *California Journal of Educational Research*) can provide guidance toward numerous sources of great value in the area of gifted children.

Hall, Theodore, *Gifted Children: The Cleveland Story*, World Publishing Company, 1956.

The Cleveland Major Work Classes have occupied an important part of the gifted child picture for many years. In this publication the highlights of the Cleveland program are summarized.

Havighurst, Robert J., Stivers, Eugene, and DeHaan, Robert F., *A Survey of the Education of Gifted Children*, The University of Chicago Press, 1955.

Criteria for a program of education of gifted children, systematic discovery of children with a wide variety of talents, motivation, use of community resources, and methods in the schools are introductions to the main feature—summaries of programs in more than 50 schools in various parts of the United States.

Heck, Arch O., *Education of Exceptional Children*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1953.

Chapters 26 to 29 include these subjects: The education of gifted children, problems faced in their education, the challenge of the gifted child.

Hildreth, Gertrude, and others, *Educating Gifted Children at Hunter College Elementary School*, Harper & Brothers, 1952.

Described in this book is the education of children of unusually high mental development as conducted in the elementary school operated by Hunter College. It details goals of the school, curriculum, class organization, teaching methods, and results.

Hollingsworth, Leta S., *Children Above 180 IQ*, World Book Company, 1942.

These materials on 12 children, published after the death of the author, bring together many of her ideas on and work with children very high on the intelligence scale.

*Junior Libraries*, November, 1955.

Several articles in this issue cover the subject of gifted children, and are closely related to their reading and library activities.

Kent State University, *The Role of the Parent in the Education and Training of the Mentally Superior Child*, Kent State University and Warren, Ohio, Public Schools, 1951.

Emphasis is put on the parent, although there is recognition that in order to do the job well a coöperative approach is vital. The place of the school and community is involved.

Kough, Jack, and DeHaan, Robert F., *Teacher's Guidance Handbook*, Science Research Associates, 1956.

These handbooks, now available on both the elementary and secondary school levels, attempt to help in identifying and in providing assistance for working with children with special needs. The gifted are one of the groups included for detailed aids and suggestions.

Martens, Elise H., "Annotated Bibliography on Gifted Children," *The Gifted Child*, edited by Paul Witty, D. C. Heath and Company, 1951.

This 46 page annotated bibliography goes into all phases of the subject, and at the time of publication constituted the most useful source of worthwhile materials. If used now, it would have to be supplemented by publications since 1951.

Metropolitan School Study Council, *How to Educate the Gifted Child*, The Council, 1956.

First-hand experiences of teachers are summarized here as they resulted from special classes, regular classes, extra opportunities, and individual projects. A teacher's checklist for identification of gifted students is also included.

National Society for the Study of Education, *The Education of Exceptional Children*, The University of Chicago Press, 1950, 49th Yearbook, Pt. II.

Chapter 14, "Special Education for the Gifted Child," of this highly respected professional series of yearbooks has six major divisions: History, philosophical considerations, identifying the gifted, characteristics, providing appropriate education, and follow-up studies. (The 1958 Yearbook, Part II, in this same series is entitled *Education for the Gifted in Schools and Colleges*.)

Newland, T. Ernest, "The Gifted," *Review of Educational Research*, December, 1953, pp. 417 ff.

Much of the research up to the date of publication, and a bibliography providing guidance to it, are included in this detailed article which aims more at the professional than at the layman.

Otto, Henry J. (ed.), *Curriculum Enrichment for Gifted Elementary School Children in Regular Classes*, The University of Texas, 1955.

A summer workshop of teachers compiled this bulletin which consists of enrichment materials in communication media, science, social studies, arithmetic, physical education, art, and music.

Palo Alto, *Meeting Individual Differences in Palo Alto: The Gifted Child*, Board of Education, 1955.

Aimed specifically at the Palo Alto teachers, this handbook suggests techniques and methods for identification and teaching the gifted.



The art work and the light touch all the way through give the publication an attractive appearance; it is the kind that teachers would want to read.

Passow, A. Harry, Beasley, Jane E., and Brooks, Deton J., Jr., "Adapting the Curriculum to the Needs, Capabilities, and Talents of Individual Students," *Review of Educational Research*, June, 1957, pp. 277-286.

A significant part of this article is devoted to surveys of programs for gifted children and curriculum adaptations for the gifted.

Passow, A. Harry, Goldberg, Miriam, Tannenbaum, Abraham J., and French, Will, *Planning for Talented Youth*, Columbia University, 1955.

This short pamphlet is one of the outstanding contributions to the field in recent years, with its thorough lists of pros and cons on ability grouping, acceleration, enrichment, discussion of the teacher of the gifted, and suggestions for research. It is the first of what will be a series of publications of the Talented Youth Project of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation.

Philadelphia Board of Public Education, *The Gifted Child: His Education in the Philadelphia Public Schools*, Board of Public Education, 1956.

Under various themes the program in Philadelphia is described; the themes are "The Search," "The Treasure," "The Problems," "The Effort," and "The Reward." Excellent pictures taken within the schools demonstrate vividly what they are attempting to do.

Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, *Guiding Your Gifted*, The Council, 1954.

This handbook for teachers, administrators, and parents attempts a thorough coverage of the subject, including identification, reasons for concern, organizational practices, working through the regular elementary and secondary school classrooms, and grouping activities.

*The Reading Teacher*, "Reading and the Gifted Child and Youth," April, 1956.

Published four times a year, the magazine of the International Reading Association frequently includes articles on the gifted. This issue is devoted entirely to the subject with seven excellent articles concentrating on various aspects of it.

Roberts, Helen Erskine, *Current Trends in the Education of the Gifted*, California State Department of Education, 1954.

Mrs. Roberts has summarized her year's visits to schools on all levels where special programs for the gifted have been developed. Her work was done under the auspices of the Fund for the Advancement of Education.



San Diego County, *Suggested Enrichment Activities for the Gifted Child*, Office of the Superintendent of Schools, San Diego County, 1954.

The suggested activities are in the areas of social studies, science, reading, oral and written communication, arithmetic, physical education, music and art.

Scheifele, Marian, *The Gifted Child in the Regular Classroom*, Columbia University, 1953.

This publication identifies the gifted child, discusses his special problems related to environment and inner feelings, and offers a plan of guidance. It shows types of programs, place of acceleration, special classes, and interest groups, and emphasizes enrichment activities and experiences.

Terman, Lewis M., and Oden, Melita H., *The Gifted Child Grows Up*, Stanford University Press, 1947.

A 25-years' follow-up of a large superior group, background of research, characteristics of the gifted, and adult statistics pertaining to the group in all phases of life are given in this classic study of gifted children. It is Volume IV of a series called "Genetic Studies of Genius."

Traxler, Arthur E. (ed.), *Selection and Guidance of Gifted Students for National Survival*, American Council on Education, 1956.

The thoughtful coverage includes selection for the professions, scholarship planning, a gifted student panel on reading, and the place of tests in instruction and guidance.

*Understanding the Child*, "The Gifted Child," April, 1951.

Each issue of this magazine had a central theme, and many of the themes were related to various categories of exceptional children. This particular one devoted a significant part of its contents to the gifted child. (Publication discontinued October, 1957.)

University City Public Schools, *Gifted Children*, University City Public Schools, Missouri, 1956.

This publication covering the consideration given to gifted children in a suburban school system summarizes reports on the organization, development, and evaluation of part-time enrichment classes in the period from 1951 to 1956.

Witty, Paul, *Helping the Gifted Child*, Science Research Associates, 1952.

In succinct form this pamphlet presents the vital problems and possible solutions related to the gifted child. Subjects discussed include: Who are the gifted, they're more normal than you think,

the gifted have their problems too, discovering the gifted, the gifted child at home, ways that schools can help.

Witty, Paul (ed.), *The Gifted Child*, D. C. Heath and Company, 1951.

This book stands out as one of the major contributions and most complete sources on the subject. At the time it was released it represented the latest thinking of most of the persons active in the field, although recent years have added some important writers to the rolls of those contributing to our understanding of the subject.

Wolfe, Dael, *America's Resources of Specialized Talent*, Harper & Brothers, 1954.

In this report information is brought together concerning resources in the United States of talented, imaginative, and trained personnel in the natural and social sciences, humanities, and other professions.

Worcester, D. A., *The Education of Children of Above-Average Mentality*, University of Nebraska Press, 1956.

Dr. Worcester's little book gives special attention to acceleration and enrichment. His approach is exceptionally clear and his viewpoints are well-supported by research plus a particularly readable manner of presentation.

Wulfg, Gretchen, *Helping the Superior Reader*, Ginn and Company, 1955.

While all gifted are obviously not superior readers, many of them are. The suggestions for teachers on how to adapt reading instruction to the needs of superior readers can be helpful. This folder is one of the Ginn and Company Contributions in Reading series.

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